

SPLIT-LEVEL

Dykes To Watch Out For



by Alison Bechdel

As well
as
this
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Books *Dykes To Watch Out For*

SPLIT-LEVEL

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Alison Bechdel's cartoons appear regularly in over sixty publications internationally.

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for Amy Rubin

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WHEN WE LAST
DROPPED IN, THINGS
WERE LOOKING
UNCHARACTERISTICALLY
COPACETIC
FOR OUR
BEVY OF
BEGUILING
BABES.

HOUSEMATES
LOIS, SPARROW, AND
GINGER ARE
NAVIGATING THE
CHALLENGING INTER-
PERSONAL DYNAMICS OF
COLLECTIVE LIVING
WITH SKILL AND
MAGNANIMITY.

COULD YOU HOLD
IT DOWN IN HERE?
I'M TRYING TO
REHEARSE FOR MY
PACKING
WORKSHOP.



IN A
FINAL
MANIC BINGE,
GINGER
COMPLETES THE
DISSERTATION
SHE'S BEEN
WRITING
FOR THE PAST
TEN
YEARS.

CAN I HEAR
AN **AMEN**?



SPARROW
IS ASSID-
UOUSLY
PURSUING
HER
DIRECTOR-
SHIP
OF THE
WOMEN'S
SHELTER.

NEXT ON ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT,
HOT HOLLYWOOD HUNKS HOPPED UP
ON HEROIN, AND MICHAEL JACK-
SON'S UROLOGIST TELLS ALL!

UH...LOIS? D'YOU
REALLY HAVE TO
WATCH THAT
RIGHT NOW? I'M
TRYING TO WRITE
A GRANT PROPO-
SAL HERE.



AFTER BEING DUMPED BY HER LATEST FLING, THE LIBIDO-INHIBITED **LOIS** IN TURN DUMPS HER PROZAC.



CLARICE, TIRELESS ATTORNEY FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FUND, **TONI**, PART-TIME ACCOUNTANT, AND **RAFFI**, FULL-TIME THREE YEAR-OLD, SUCCESSFULLY PETITION THE STATE TO BECOME A LEGAL NUCLEAR FAMILY.



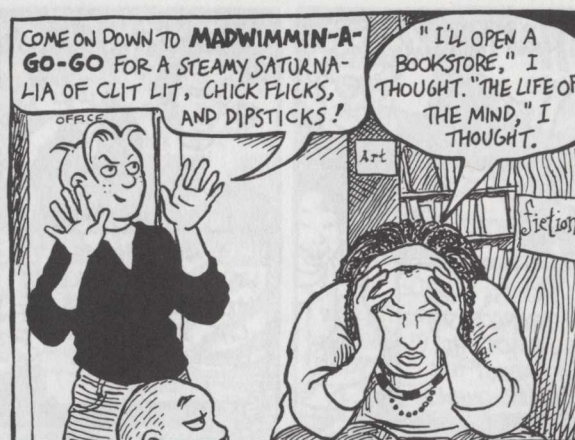
TONI'S PAL **CARLOS** HELPS OUT WITH CHILD-CARE IN HIS COPIOUS SPARE TIME.



AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS, **JEZANNA** INTRODUCES A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.



THE BOOK-STORE IS SAVED FROM THE BRINK OF DISSOLUTION BY A RATHER RIBALD FUND-RAISING EVENT.



EVIL WOMEN'S STUDIES PROFESSOR **SYDNEY** APOLOGIZES TO MADWIMMIN EMPLOYEE **THEA** FOR HER EGREGIOUS BEHAVIOR YEARS AGO.



THEA'S BOOK-SLINGING CO-WORKER **MO** TAKES THIS AS LICENSE TO DATE SAID PROFESSOR...



... AND THEREBY FALLS PREY TO HER HEADY CHARMS.



AT THIS MODERATELY TITILLATING JUNCTURE, LET US RESUME OUR TAWDRY TALE.

HARD CORE

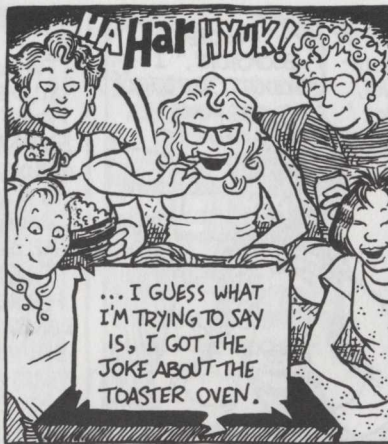
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FROM EAST GRAND FORKS TO KEY WEST, QUEER AMERICA HUDDLES 'ROUND ITS HOME ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS FOR A TELEHISTORIC MOMENT OF COLLECTIVE CATHARSIS.

...AND WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

SUSAN.

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DON'T YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE? THEY'RE TRYING TO **NEUTRALIZE** US! THEY FEED US SOME PHONY SITCOM ABOUT OUR LIVES SO WE'LL STAY HOME AND **WATCH** IT, INSTEAD OF GOING OUT AND MAKING OUR **OWN** SUBVERSIVE CULTURE!

WELL, JERRY FAIWEEL SEEMS TO FIND THIS SHOW PRETTY DAMN SUBVERSIVE. BESIDES, IT'S **NOT** PHONY. SHE'S A REAL LIVE LESBO!



THAT'S THE WORST PART! TRY TO CHANGE ANYTHING IN THIS COUNTRY AND YOU END UP GETTING **PACKAGED** AND **SOLD BACK** TO YOURSELF! PLUS NOW EVERY SHMOE ON THE STREET'S GONNA THINK THEY KNOW WHAT MY LIFE IS LIKE!



SYDNEY, WHY WATCH THE DISNEY VERSION WHEN YOU HAVE THE REAL DEAL RIGHT HERE?



RELAX, I'M TAPING IT. WE CAN WATCH IT AFTER.

WELL, I FOR ONE THINK IT'S SUPER!



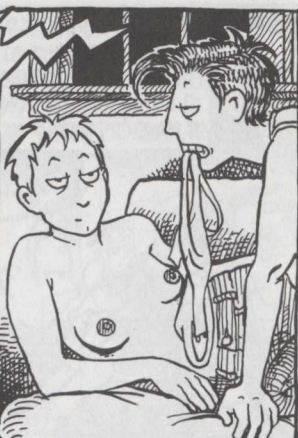
AFTER DOING SOMETHING OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS WOULD MOST DEFINITELY OBJECT TO, IF WE HAD ANY.



LATER, SOMETIME DURING "PRIMETIME LIVE..."



Click! HI, IT'S MOM. YOU MUST BE OUT AT ONE OF THOSE "ELLEN" PARTIES. WELL, I **LOVED** THE SHOW. SHE'S SUCH AN ATTRACTIVE GIRL! Y'KNOW YOU'D LOOK **GREAT** WITH THAT HAIRSTYLE! YOUR DAD AND I WERE JUST SAYING MAYBE ONE DAY YOU COULD **MANAGE** A BOOKSTORE LIKE ELLEN, INSTEAD OF JUST WORKING IN ONE. WOULDN'T THAT BE NICE? CALL US! BYE!

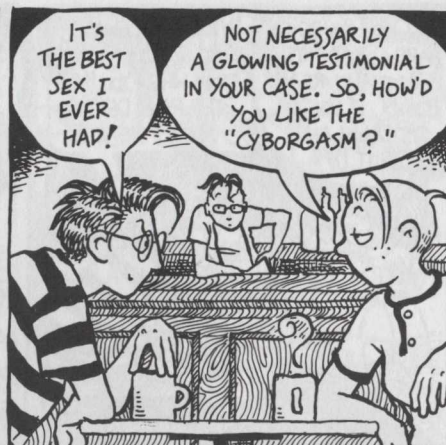


let the lover beware

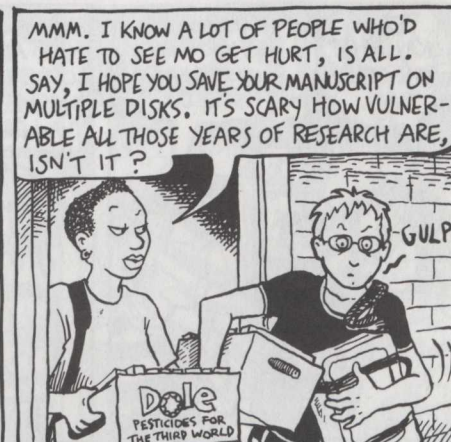
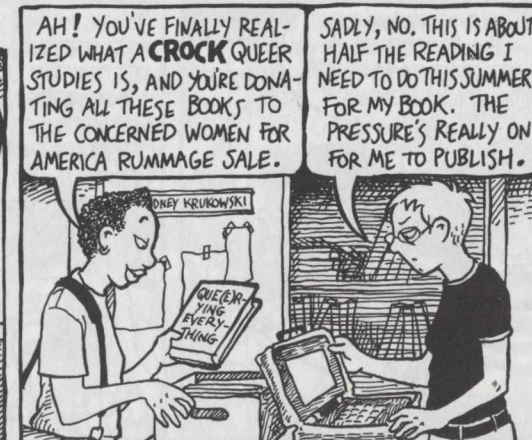
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Mo's HAVING A COFFEE BREAK WITH EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE CONFIDANTE.

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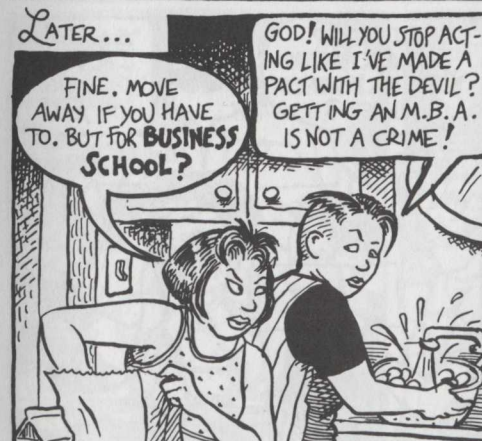
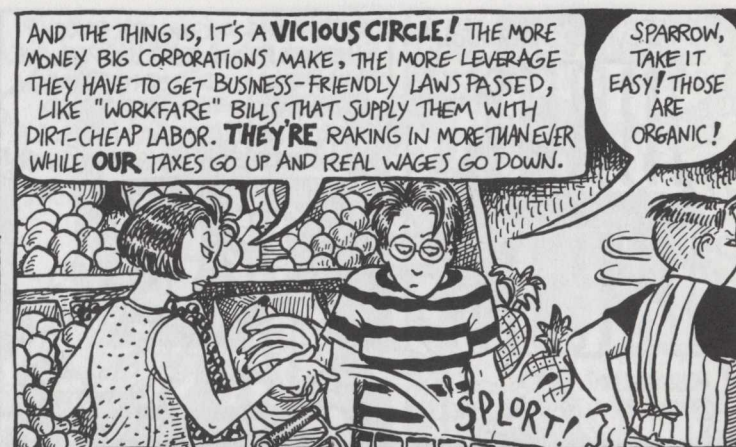


MEANWHILE, OVER AT THE UNIVERSITY...



two degrees and separation

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IT'S THE EVENT O' THE SEASON!

BLUE PARTY

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YOU'RE GOING TO GINGER'S PARTY?
... YEAH, I **KNOW** IT'S A BIG DEAL SHE
FINALLY GOT HER DOCTORATE. I MEAN,
I WAS INVITED TOO, BUT I TOLD
SPARROW WE ALREADY HAD PLANS. I'M
MAKING MY SPECIAL MUNG BEAN GUMBO!



WELL, WHY DON'T GINGER AND I
PICK YOU UP? THAT WAY WE'LL SEE
EACH OTHER **AND** GO TO THE PARTY!
KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.

SUCH A
ROMANTIC.

SHH!



MEANWHILE...

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED
TO DO WHILE YOU'RE OFF IN
BOSTON AT BUSINESS SCHOOL?
SIT HOME KNITTING YOU
POWER TIES?

WELL... I DUNNO.
MAYBE WE SHOULD
TAKE A BREAK,
SEE OTHER PEOPLE
FOR A WHILE.

CHOP
CHOP!



WHAT?

IT'S A TWO YEAR
PROGRAM. I DON'T
EXPECT YOU TO JUST
WAIT AROUND.

URF.



HI! I PICKED
UP THE CAKE.
NEED HELP WITH
DINNER?

SOB!

SWEETIE,
I'M JUST
THINKING
OF YOU!



UH... I'LL
GO PUT
THIS ON A
PLATE.

CAN'T WE DISCUSS
THIS LIKE ADULTS?
YOU ALWAYS GET
SO EMOTIONAL!

I THINK
YOU'D BETTER
LEAVE
RIGHT
NOW!



JUNE!
WHERE ARE YOU
GOING?

BOSTON.



YOU'RE NOT STILL MAD,
ARE YOU? I'LL EAT
YOUR GUMBO LATER!

WHAT'S GOING
ON IN HERE?

I DON'T
THINK
SO.

UH...
THERE'S A
SMALL PROBLEM
WITH DINNER.



SNIFF!
I'M SORRY,
GINGER!

OH, SPARROW!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT
THE FOOD!



THE IMPORTANT THING
IS SHARING THIS... UH...
HAPPY MOMENT WITH
ALL OF YOU!

BAW!



MAYBE FOR APPETIZERS
WE SHOULD HAVE
SOME OF THESE NEW
ANTIDEPRESSANTS
I'M TAKING.

"CONGRATULATIONS
ON YOUR RETIRE-
MENT?" LOIS,
THIS ISN'T THE
CAKE I ORDERED!



dirty movies

ONE SUMMER'S MORN...

OH, GREAT! "WATERMELON WOMAN" IS AT THE THALIA! WANNA GO TONIGHT?

I CAN'T...I'VE GOTTA WORK ON MY BOOK. IN FACT, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU ALL WEEKEND.

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CHERYL DUNYE'S N.E.A. FUNDED FILM IS "FLOTSAM FLOATING DOWN A SEWER," SET JESSE HELMS

POST-MORTEM POSTULATIONS

GOD, SYDNEY! WHAT AM I, A YO-YO? EVERY TIME WE GET CLOSE, YOU PUSH ME AWAY AGAIN!

I'M NOT PUSHING YOU AWAY! I JUST HAVE WORK TO DO! WHY CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

"NOW BENJI, THERE'S A FILM!" SENATOR CONTINUES

POSTNASAL PARADIGMS

OH, I UNDERSTAND! YOU ONLY SEE ME WHEN YOU WANNA BUMP "LIBIDINAL SURFACES" INSTEAD OF THEORIZE ABOUT THEM!

MMM...I LIKE IT WHEN YOU USE POSTMODERN JARGON! COME BACK TO BED...

DOWN AT THE BOOKSTORE...

CAN I BUM A CIGARETTE, ANJI?

SINCE WHEN DO YOU SMOKE?

SINCE I WANT AN EXCUSE TO LOITER OUT HERE INSTEAD OF WORKING.

HEY! HAVE YOU SEEN THAT MOVIE "ALL OVER ME?"

YOU REALLY SHOULD TAKE A BASIC COMPUTER CLASS.

I'D RATHER TAKE IN AN AIR-CONDITIONED MATINEE. LET'S GO SEE HERCULES.

ABSOLUTELY NOT. I'M TRYING TO RESTRICT HIS DISNEY INTAKE.

YOU HAVE TO GO, QUERIDA, OR PEOPLE WILL THINK YOU'RE A SOUTHERN BAPTIST!

OKAY, OKAY! I'LL COME TO THE MOVIES WITH YOU! NOW SAY IT! PLEASE!

OH, BABY. LET ME PRIVILEGE LESBIAN POSITIONALITY BY DESTABILIZING YOUR BODILY METANARRATIVE.

AMONG THE RANKS OF THE UNEMPLOYED...

I'VE SENT OUT THIRTY-FIVE RESUMES AND GOTTEN ZERO CALLS. NO ONE WANTS TO HIRE AN ACCOUNTANT WHO'S BEEN OUT OF THE JOB MARKET FOR FOUR YEARS.

THESE LISTINGS ARE EITHER FOR NIGHT JANITORS, OR PEOPLE WITH "SOLID EXPERIENCE IN RS232/485." WHAT AM I GONNA DO?

NO. I WAS GONNA GO THIS WEEKEND.

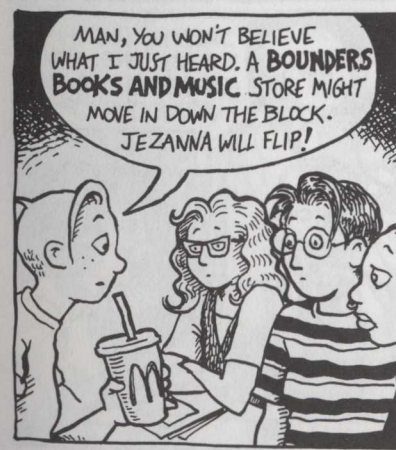
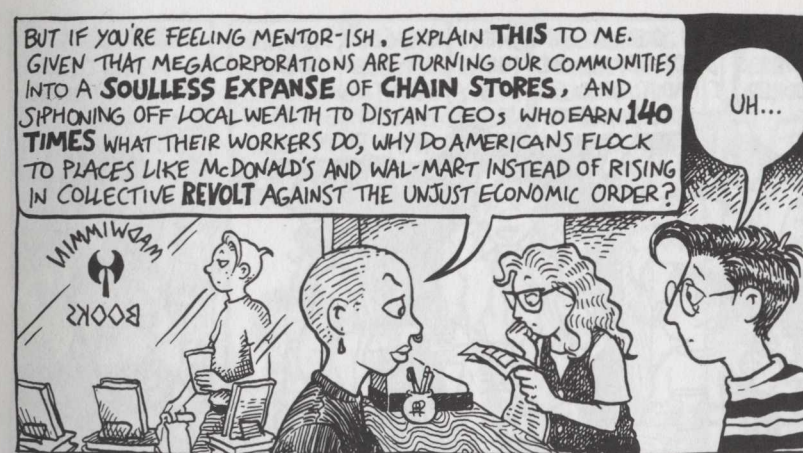
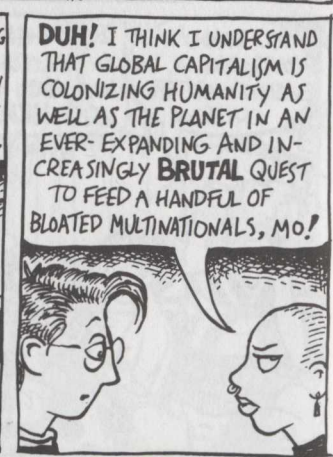
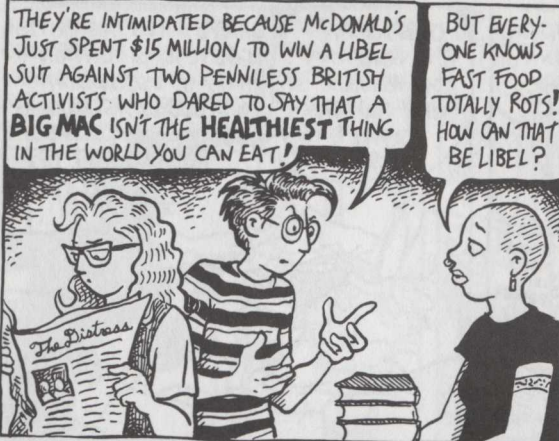
LOIS, YOU HAFTA TAKE ME! JUST BECAUSE IT HAS TWO GIRLS KISSING, THEY RATED IT 'R.' IF I GO WITH SOMEONE OLDER, I CAN PASS FOR EIGHTEEN.

SURE. HECK, NEXT TO AN OLD HAG LIKE ME >KOFF< YOU'LL LOOK MIDDLE-AGED.

D'YOU THINK? MAYBE TO BE SAFE, I'LL BORROW MY MOM'S K.D. LANG T-SHIRT.

CLASSIFIED

FUNDAMENTALISTS BOYCOTT DISNEY FOR GAY-FRIENDLY POLICIES



the mythology of everyday life

OUR HEROINE RETURNS HOME FROM HER LABORS.

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HOW NICE FOR YOU. IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT I DID TODAY, I WON AN INJUNCTION AGAINST A NITRIC ACID PLANT, THEN I FAILED TO PREVENT 300 ACRES OF WETLANDS FROM BEING TURNED INTO A **LANDFILL**, THEN MY CASE AGAINST A PESTICIDE COMPANY GOT **DISMISSED** ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS.



MEEMA! IN DA MOVIE, HEWKUWEES, HE, HE, HE CUT OFF DA MONSTOW'S HEAD AN' DEN IT GWEW MOW HEADS!

IT GREW MORE HEADS? HUH. THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH IN THREE MILLENNIA.



OOPS.

SWEETIE, THAT WAS THE LAST ONE. HOW ABOUT SOME NICE, COLD APPLE JUICE?

HEY, THAT BEER LOOKS GOOD.

HERCULES. IN DIGITAL STEREO AIR CONDITIONING.



OH, CLARICE. I HAVEN'T EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT DINNER YET! WE JUST GOT BACK FROM THE MOVIES.

HI, MEEMA.

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE BEEN PARBOILED, SWEET-HEART.

UNH. OUR AIR CONDITIONER DIED, AND THE ONLY THING I HAD TIME TO EAT ALL DAY WAS A SNO-CONE.

OKAY. HERE'S A THOUGHT. MAYBE IF I GO OUT AND COME BACK IN, YOU'LL TELL ME YOU FOUND A **JOB** TODAY, THERE'LL BE SOMETHING TO **EAT**, AND **STANLEY KOWALSKI** HERE WILL BE GONE.



CLARICE, I'M SORRY YOU HAD A BAD DAY, BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO BE RUDE.

I SHOULD BE GOING ANYWAY. BLANCHE AND STELLA WILL BE WANTING THEIR DINNER.



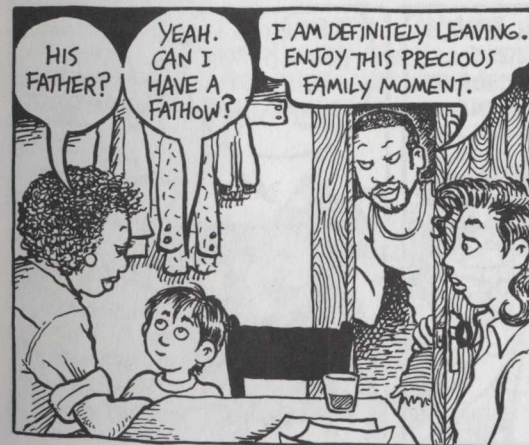
AN' MEEMA, DERE WAS DIS GUY DEUCE.

DEUCE?

ZEUS, RAFFI.



YEAH. I WIKED HIM. HE HAD A BIG BEARD AN' HE WAS HEWKUWEES FATHOW.



HIS FATHER?

YEAH. CAN I HAVE A FATHOW?

I AM DEFINITELY LEAVING. ENJOY THIS PRECIOUS FAMILY MOMENT.



UM... WELL, YOU SEE, RAFFI... WHEN MOMMY AND I DECIDED WE WANTED YOU, WE... UH... WENT TO A PLACE CALLED THE **SPERM BANK**...

CLARICE, RELAX! NO, RAFFI, YOU CAN'T HAVE A FATHER. YOU HAVE TWO MOTHERS.



DEN CAN I HAVE A GIANT DOG WIFTHWEE HEADS WIKE IN DA MOVIE?

A DOG? OKAY!

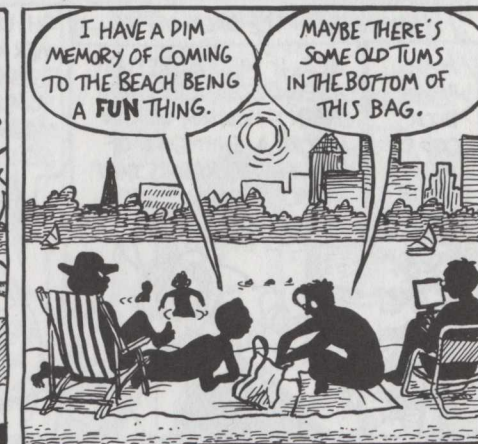
NICE WORK, COUNSELOR. ARE YOU THIS COOL-HEADED IN COURT?

R&R

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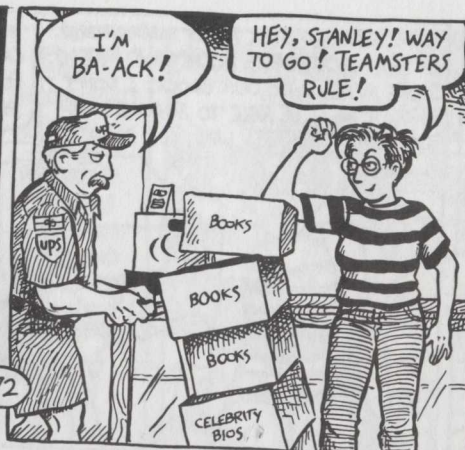
OUR PREOCCUPIED PALS HAVE PACKED UP ALL THEIR CARES AND WOES AND BROUGHT THEM TO THE BEACH.



one
day

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MEANWHILE, IN THE BACK OFFICE...



MEANWHILE...



Change to Spare

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YES, I'M SURE! I NEED A CHANGE! MY LIFE IS TOTALLY STALLED.

I DUNNO IF THIS WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE. BUT I WISH YOU AND JUNE HAD BROKEN UP YEARS AGO IF THAT'S WHAT IT TOOK TO MAKE YOU CHANGE THIS WASHED-UP 'DO.

the qon2 shop

OH, REALLY. SPEAKING OF WASHED-UP, I HEAR YOU'RE NOT HAVING MUCH LUCK SELLING YOUR SECOND BOOK.

HEY, I CAN'T HELP IT IF ALL PUBLISHERS WANT IS "BILLY GRAHAM'S FAVORITE LOW-FAT CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SPIRIT RECIPES."



SPARROW, I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU!

IT'S COMING FROM UP-STAIRS. COULD YOU PLEASE TURN THE TV DOWN?

TWICE AS MANY WOMEN SAY O.B.'S APPLICATOR IS MORE COMFORTABLE TO INSERT THAN TAMPAX!



BAM! BAM! BAM!

LOIS! WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

SHIT!

IT'S OKAY! I'VE GOT THE WINDOW OPEN!



A CIGAR? OH, THIS IS THE LAST STRAW!

HEY, NICE HAIRCUT! HOW ABOUT YOU AND I PASSING OUT ON THE VERANDA? OR WOULD YOU RATHER PASS OUT HERE?



WILL YOU PUT THAT OUT! I HAVE HAD IT WITH YOU AND YOUR ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT!

WHY THANK YOU! I LIKE TO THINK MY DEVELOPMENT IS ARRESTING.



GOD! I AM TOO OLD TO BE LIVING IN A SWINGING BACHELOR PAD!

YEAH, WELL, YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE TO MUCH LONGER.



THAT WAS THE LANDLORD. HE'S PUTTING THE HOUSE ON THE MARKET.



LATER...

DIGGER, RELAX! IT'S ONLY ME.

GRRR!



...AND CYNTHIA COOPER GETS INSIDE FOR TWO!

GO, COOP!



GINGER! WHAT'S BURNING?

AAA!

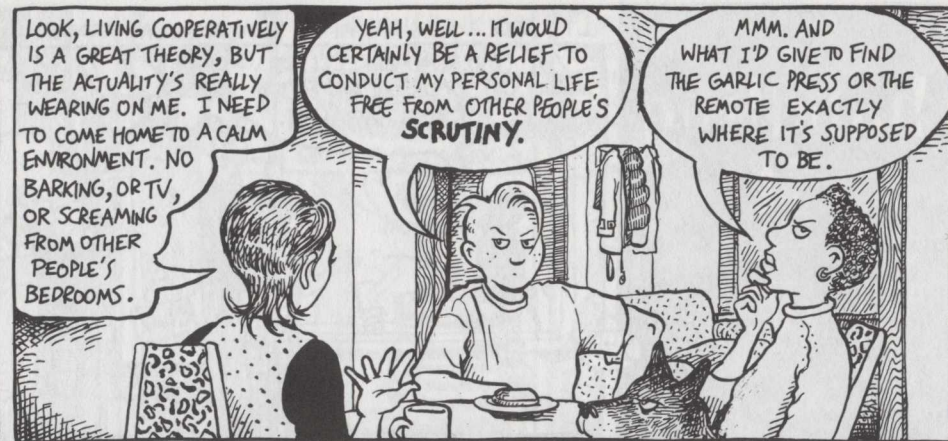
...CHARLOTTE LEADS HOUSTON 54-39. YOU'RE WATCHING THE WNBA ON NBC.

all
for
one

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THE FIRST PROSPECTIVE BUYERS HAVE JUST FINISHED TOURING OUR HAPLESS HOUSEMATES' HOME.



I BET THE WIFE HYPHENATES THEIR LAST NAMES AND THE HUSBAND JUST USES HIS OWN.

NICE TOUCH, LOIS, THE DILDOS ALL TUCKED UNDER YOUR COVERS LIKE THEY WERE GOING TO SLEEP. I'D SWEAR BRAD AND JANET BLANCHED, IF THEY WEREN'T SO COLORLESS TO BEGIN WITH.

I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS! STRANGERS TRAIPSING THROUGH THE HOUSE, NOT KNOWING WHERE WE'LL BE IN TWO MONTHS ... WE'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!



handling it

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IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY AT THE HELM FOR OUR HEROINE...



spaced out

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SO THE POSSIBILITY OF THE CASSINI PROBE HURLING BACK INTO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE WITH 70 POUNDS OF DEADLY PLUTONIUM ON BOARD DOESN'T GIVE YOU EVEN A SLIGHT QUALM?

NAH.

HOW DOES SOMEONE WHO PRIDES HERSELF ON HER CRITICAL THINKING SWALLOW NASA'S PRO-NUCLEAR PROPAGANDA SO BLITHELY?

I EXPECT IT'S SIMILAR TO THE WAY YOU SWALLOW THE LEFT'S ANTI-SCIENCE PROPAGANDA WITH SUCH CAREFREE **-SNIFF-** ABANDON.

OH, SO I SHOULD TRUST A BUNCH OF GOVERNMENT "DUCK AND COVER" FLACKS OVER THOUSANDS OF SELFLESS PEACE ACTIVISTS.

MO, I CAN'T ARGUE WITH YOUR KNEEJERK **-SNIFF-** OVERSIMPLIFICATIONS. DAMN!

YOUR ALLERGIES?

YEAH, AND I DON'T HAVE MY PILLS. I'M GONNA HAVE TO LEAVE BEFORE IT GETS WORSE.

HOW COME YOU WEREN'T ALLERGIC TO MY CATS WHEN WE FIRST STARTED GOING OUT?

ENDORPHINS OFTEN OVERRIDE ALLERGIC REACTIONS. I READ A PAPER ON IT ONCE. WHERE'S MY SCARF?

OVER AT CLARICE & TONI'S...



THIS PLACE IS DRIVING ME **NUTS!** THE BEDROOM CLOSET'S SO PACKED, ALL MY SUITS ARE CRUSHED. AND I RIPPED THIS THING TRYING TO GET THE DOOR SHUT.

STINKY!

GREAT. THAT WAS HIS FAVORITE BEANIE BABY.



ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. I'LL LOOK AT IT.

MEANWHILE...

THE REALTOR'S BRINGING SOME PEOPLE OVER AT SEVEN. I'M GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AND GRADE PAPERS.

I SHOULD GO TO THE GYM ANYWAY.

AND I'VE GOT A... I MEAN, I'M HAVING DINNER WITH SOMEONE.

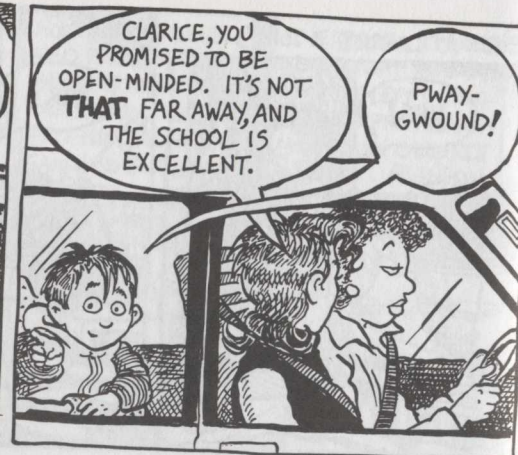
IS "SOMEONE" PICKING YOU UP, OR CAN I GIVE YOU A RIDE "SOMEWHERE?"

WHAT'S THE BIG MYSTERY? IS SHE IN A RELATIONSHIP? MARRIED? HIGH PROFILE AND IN THE CLOSET?

DOES THE YWCA STILL RENT ROOMS? MAYBE I'LL CHECK IN THERE TILL I CAN FIND MY OWN SPACE.

suburban subversion

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disclosure

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Mo's HAVING A LITTLE HOLIDAY CHEER WITH SYDNEY'S FATHER AND STEP-MOTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHY HARVARD TURNED YOUR BOOK DOWN, SYD. I SPOKE TO MY EDITOR THERE ABOUT IT.

DAD, IT'S MORE COMPETITIVE NOW. NOT LIKE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG AND ANY HALF-WIT COULD GET HIS DISSERTATION PUBLISHED.

SYDNEY, YOU DIDN'T FAWN OVER PAUL'S OBSCENELY EXPENSIVE NEW SWEATER.

NICE! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A CASHMERE TURTLENECK.



I'LL GET YOU ONE TOMORROW. JENNIFER ALREADY THINKS I SPEND TOO MUCH MONEY. A LITTLE MORE WON'T HURT.

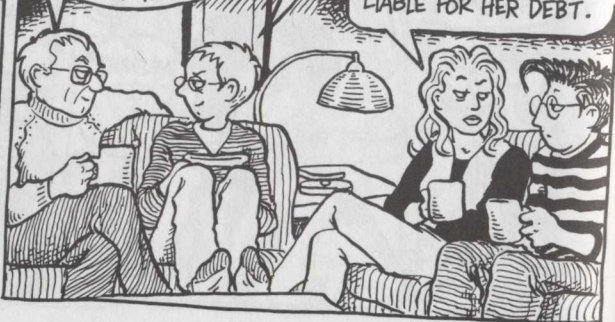
HEY, ONE OF MY CREDIT CARDS RAISED MY LIMIT ANOTHER THOU! LET'S GO CHECK OUT THE NEW SKI EQUIPMENT, TOO.

SYDNEY! YOU CAN'T JUST BUY STUFF UNTIL YOU MAX OUT YOUR CREDIT! THAT'S INSANE!

AND LET'S GO BY GIZMO WORLD. I NEED A NEW PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANT.

GREAT!

YOU SHOULD BE GLAD YOU TWO CAN'T GET MARRIED. WHEN SHE CRASHES AND BURNS, YOU WON'T BE LIABLE FOR HER DEBT.



MEANWHILE, GINGER IS OFF JOBBUNTING AT THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION.

LOIS! I GOT YOUR MESSAGE! IS DIGGER OKAY?

YEAH, EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL. SHE WAS LIMPING WHEN I GOT HOME, SO I TOOK HER TO THE VET. THEY SAID SHE HAS RHEUMATISM AND TO GIVE HER IBUPROFEN.



GINGER, RELAX! I CANCELLED MY PLANS TO GO TO MY FOLKS SO I CAN STAY WITH HER ALL WEEKEND.

HEY, NO PROBLEM, BELIEVE ME. I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE.

OKAY. WAIT A SEC.



HEY, GINGER! SOUNDS LIKE SPARROW'S HOME. AND I THINK SHE MIGHT HAVE THE MYSTERY DATE IN TOW.

REALLY? WHO IS IT? WHAT'S SHE LOOK LIKE?



UH... KINDA LIKE RICHARD DREYFUSS IN "JAWS," ONLY BALDER.

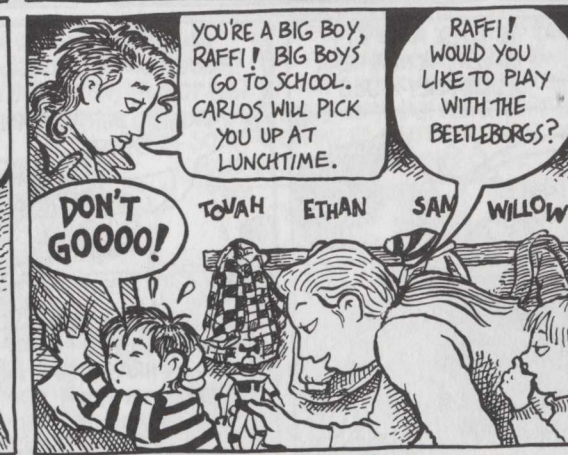
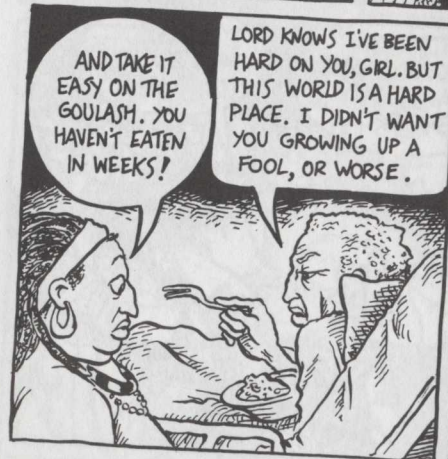
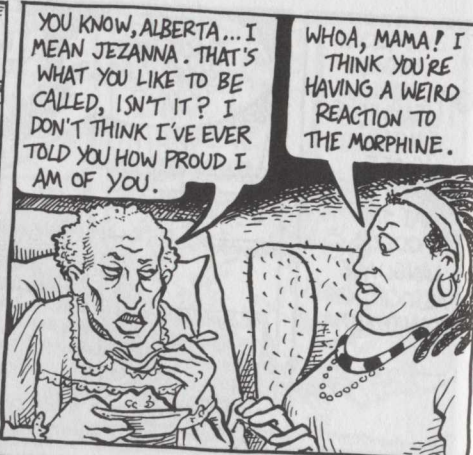
LOIS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



the long goodbye

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a GUY thing

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GINGER
RE-
TURNS
FROM
THE
MLA
CON-
VENTION.



TIP O' THE NIB TO AMEY "FÜKENGÜVEN" RADCLIFFE

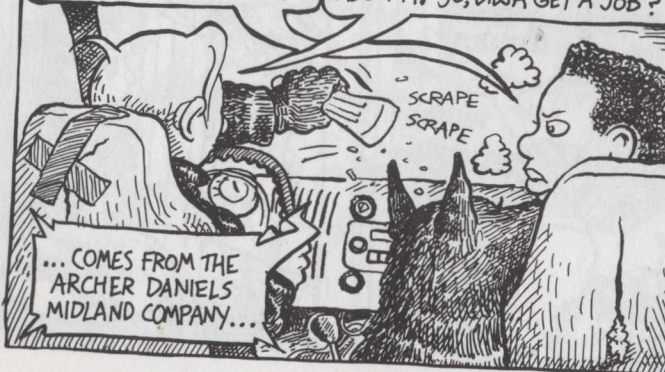
CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE YOUR SELFISH MOTHER FOR PUTTING HER CAREER FIRST AND LEAVING HER POOR L'IL RHEUMATIC PUPPY HOME ALL ALONE?

DIGGER, I TOLD YOU TO MAKE HER BEG.



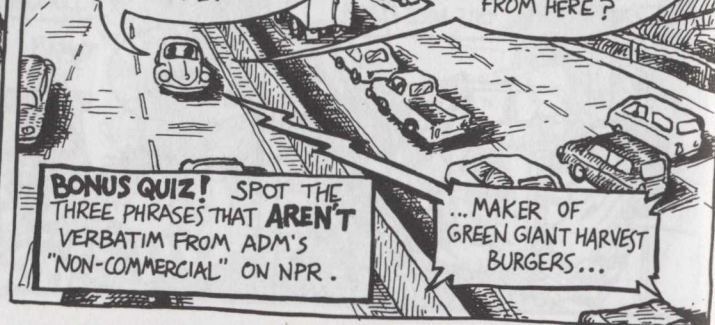
GOD, LOIS! IT'S COLDER HERE THAN IN TORONTO! DON'T YOU HAVE HEAT IN THIS THING?

NO, AND AT THE LEASE RATE I'M PAYING, MY DEALER'S GONNA HEAR ABOUT IT! SO, DIDJA GET A JOB?



OH, I DUNNO... THE PRINCETON INTERVIEW WAS TOUGH, BUT I REALLY IMPRESSED BUFFALO LAKE STATE.

BUFFALO LAKE? YOU FLEW ALL THE WAY TO CANADA TO GET INTERVIEWED BY A RINKY-DINK SCHOOL TWO HOURS FROM HERE?



...MAKER OF GREEN GIANT HARVEST BURGERS...

ONE HOUR AND FORTY-FIVE MINUTES. TENURE TRACK. 28 THOU AND A KILLER SCHEDULE. AND SPEAKING OF HARSH REALITIES, ARE WE HOMELESS YET?

I DON'T THINK SO. THE REALTOR ONLY BROUGHT ONE BUYER THROUGH WHILE YOU WERE GONE.



AND WHAT THE HELL IS UP WITH SPARROW?!

SHE'S SEEING THIS GUY!



YEAH, BUT HOW MUCH OF HIM?

WELL, NOT THE WHOLE CHIMI-CHANGA, APPARENTLY. HE DIDN'T SLEEP OVER.



A MAN! WHAT IS THIS? SOME KIND OF MIDLIFE CRISIS?!

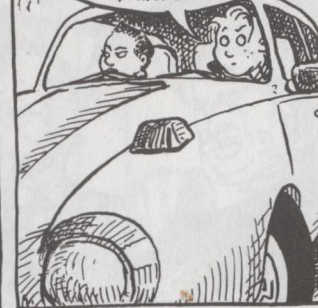


I DUNNO. SHE WON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT IT. SHE'S PROBABLY AFRAID WE'LL DISAPPROVE.

REALLY? WELL THAT'S INSULTING! I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MEN! AS LONG AS THEY DON'T WALK AROUND NAKED. OR GET THEIR BODY HAIR ALL OVER THE SOAP. OR TAKE UP A LOT OF SPACE. OR HAVE LOUD, BOOMING VOICES. OR...

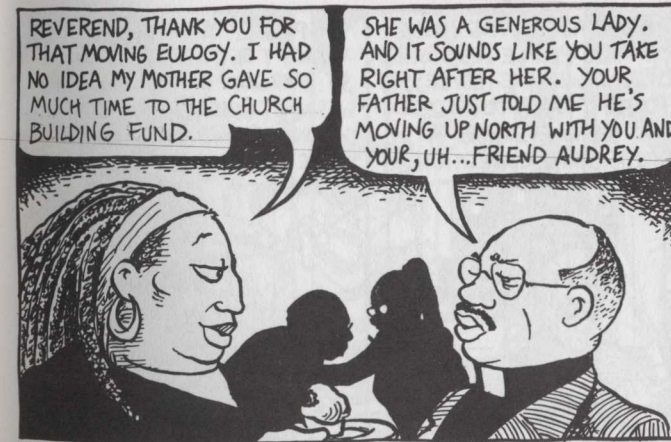


YEAH, JEEZ. I CAN'T BELIEVE SPARROW WOULD THINK WE WERE THAT SMALL-MINDED.



life with father

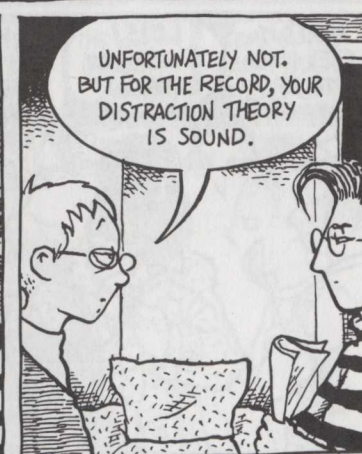
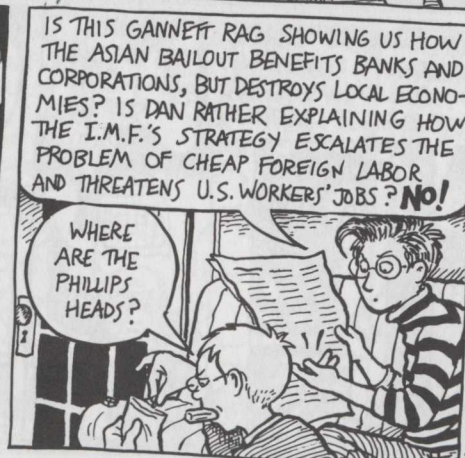
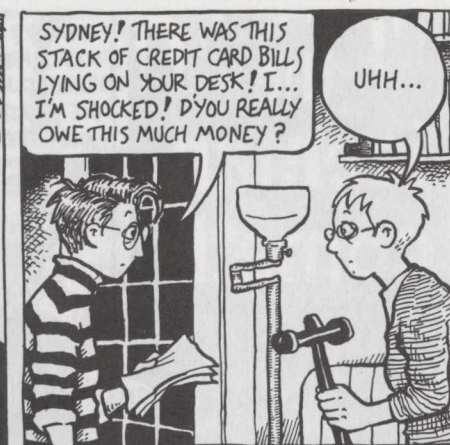
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divert & conquer

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A TIP TO THE NIB TO CHRIS MOES

the iceman cometh

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GINGER! THANK GOD YOU'RE HOME! I WAS SO WORRIED WHEN I HEARD THE WEATHER REPORT. HOW WERE THE ROADS?

FOUR HOURS TO DRIVE A HUNDRED MILES. I CAN'T UNCLENCH MY HANDS.

HOW'D IT GO AT BUFFALO LAKE STATE? ARE THEY GONNA HIRE YOU?

I HAVE A SINKING FEELING THEY MIGHT. SPARROW, YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT ARE YOU?

SHE PROBABLY HAS A DATE WITH HER GENTLEMAN CALLER.

WHAT'S IT FEEL LIKE TO BE STRAIGHT?

LOIS! I... I'M NOT STRAIGHT!

SO WHAT'RE YOU DOING WITH THIS GUY? TALK TO US! YOU'VE BEEN SNEAKING AROUND LIKE A GUILTY TEENAGER!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING! THIS IS VERY CONFUSING, AND YOU'RE NOT MAKING IT ANY EASIER.

ARE YOU SCHTUPPING HIM?

NO.

DO YOU WANT TO?

SPARROW, INVITE HIM IN FOR A SECOND! WHAT'RE YOU AFRAID OF?

YEAH. I PROMISE I WON'T CARVE UP A CUCUMBER WITH A CLEAVER WHILE SHOUTING "DEATH TO THE PATRIARCHY."

LOOK, I'M JUST NOT READY TO HANG OUT PLAYING PARCHEESI WITH ALL OF YOU YET.

HI, STUART! STUART?

WHAT HAPPENED?

M-MY CAR... PHONE POLE... T-TEN BLOCKS AWAY...

THE WHITE COROLLA? I SAW THAT! ARE YOU OKAY?

COME ON IN, LADDY BUCK. I'LL SET UP THE PARCHEESI BOARD.

YES... I THINK. I DON'T KNOW! I REALLY LIKE HIM, BUT... HE'S A MAN!

WELL, THAT'S NOT NECESSARILY A PERMANENT CONDITION.

SHUT UP, LOIS. HOW DOES HE FEEL? WHAT DOES HE WANT?

HE'S A LITTLE WARY, TOO. HE SEEMS TO HAVE A PATTERN OF GETTING INVOLVED WITH WOMEN WHO TURN OUT TO BE LESBIANS.

WHAT IS IT WITH THOSE GUYS?

STOMP STOMP

WUF!

HERE HE IS. SEE YOU LATER.

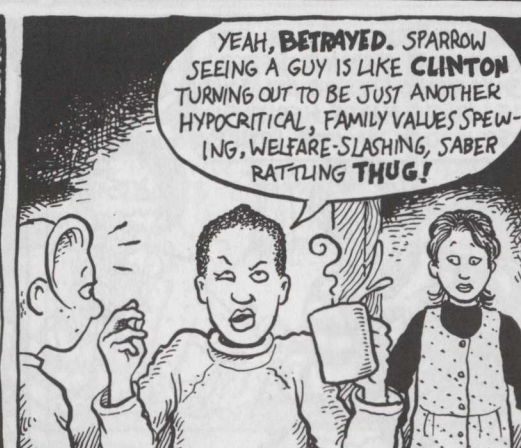
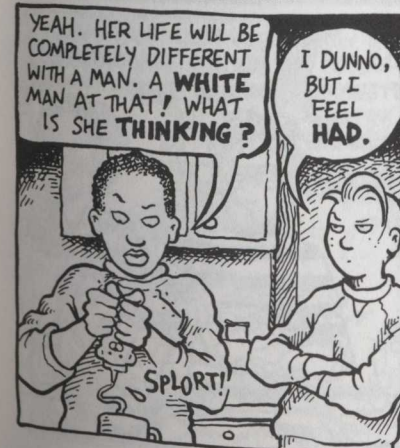
CLIK!

collateral DAMAGE

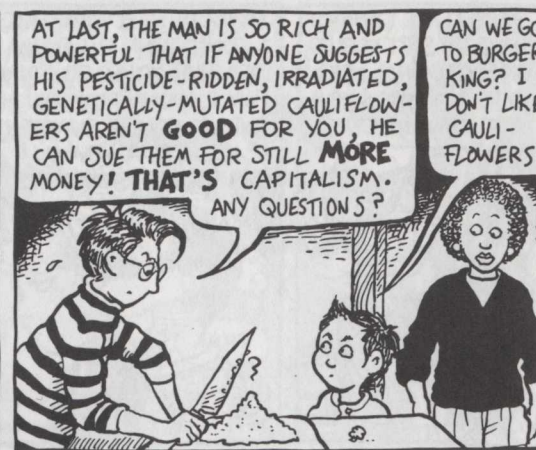
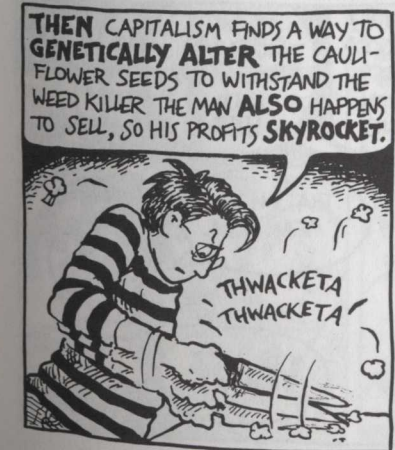
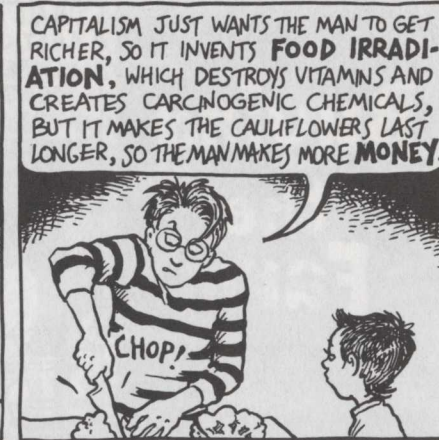
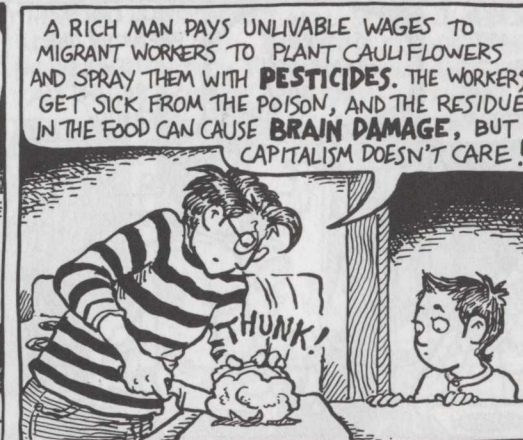
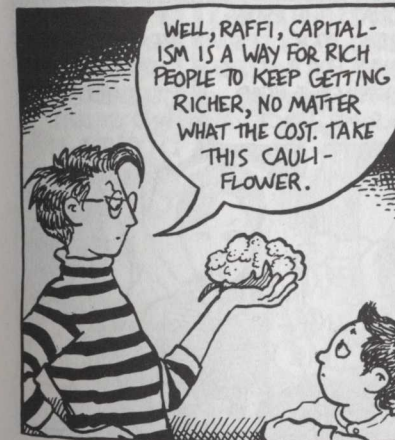
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SPARROW'S SWAIN APPEARS TO BE IN A MILD STATE OF SHOCK.

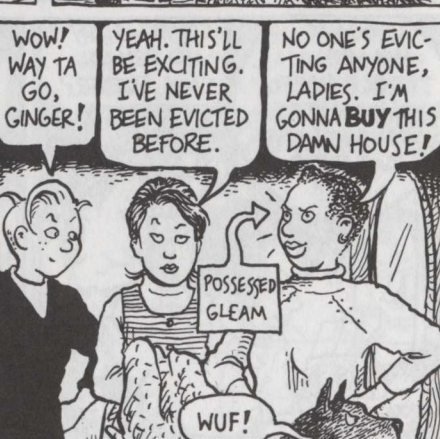
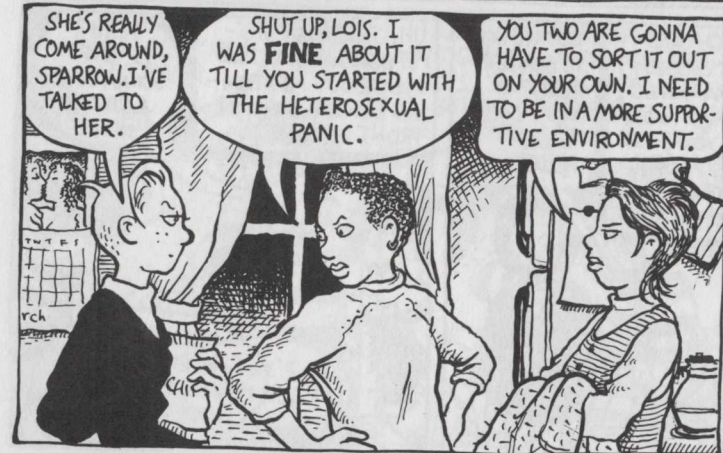


object lesson



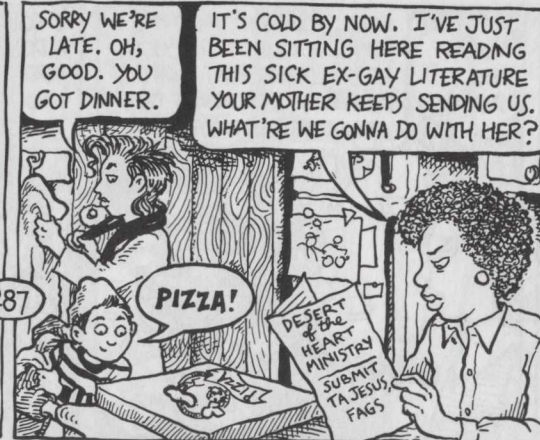
Buying the Farm

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everything I
need to know I
learned from my
four-year-old

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WHERE IS THE SLUSH of YESTERYEAR?

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ONE SPRINGY SATURDAY MORNING...

FEMINISTS CAN'T WIN! IF WE CRITICIZE CLINTON'S BEHAVIOR, WE'RE PRUDES. AND IF WE SUGGEST HIS SEX LIFE IS HIS OWN BUSINESS, WE'RE HYPOCRITES. IT'S THE SAME OLD VIRGIN / WHORE TRAP.



ACTUALLY, I WAS JUST THINKING THAT ALL THIS OBSESSION WITH OUR FEARLESS LEADER'S WENCHING HAS HAD THE INTERESTING ANCILLARY FUNCTION OF EXPANDING THE DISCURSIVE DEMARICATIONS OF WOMEN'S SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITY.



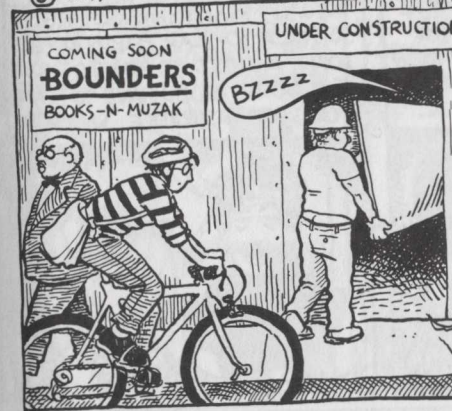
THE MORE OPEN DISCUSSION THERE IS ABOUT SEX, THE MORE WE MOVE BEYOND THE FALSE POLARITY OF WOMEN AS EITHER SEXUAL PREY, OR FRAIL VIRGINS IN NEED OF PROTECTION.



SOMEHOW, I THINK THAT POINT WILL ELUDE YOUR AVERAGE JOE MOLESTER. IF THIS IS PROGRESS, TAKE ME BACK TO THE FIFTIES. HEY! THAT'S THE LAST BANANA!



FORTY-SEVEN MINUTES LATER...



deferred Interest

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...AND WITH AN ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGE, YOU WANT TO BE CAREFUL OF NEGATIVE AMORTIZATION, OR DEFERRED INTEREST, BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE YEAR, YOU COULD BE FURTHER IN DEBT THAN WHEN YOU STARTED.

GOD, MY HEAD'S SWIMMING. I'M SO GLAD WE'RE BUYING HOUSES AT THE SAME TIME. I DON'T KNOW IF I COULD FIGURE ALL THIS OUT ON MY OWN.

YOU'LL GET THE HANG OF IT. IT'S ACTUALLY REALLY INTERESTING. SO FOR A 30-YEAR FIXED-RATE LOAN, YOU NEED TO PAY 20 PERCENT DOWN, OR YOU HAVE TO BUY MORTGAGE INSURANCE, WHICH...

I THINK IT'S GREAT YOU'RE COMMITTED TO STAYING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, GINGER. I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE, BUT...

BUT WE DON'T WANT RAFFI GROWING UP NEXT DOOR TO A CRACK HOUSE.

OKAY. THE BEST DEAL IS A 15-YEAR LOAN. YOU END UP PAYING WAY LESS INTEREST, BUT OF COURSE THE MONTHLY PAYMENTS ARE HIGHER.

I DON'T THINK I COULD AFFORD THAT. BUFFALO LAKE IS ONLY GIVING ME A PITTANCE.

HOW'D YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THE JOB? DIDN'T YOU SAY TEACHING AT A MOSTLY WHITE, SMALL-TOWN STATE COLLEGE SOUNDED LIKE THE NINTH CIRCLE OF HELL?

WELL, HELL STARTED LOOKING PRETTY GOOD. IT'S NOT EXACTLY A BUYER'S MARKET OUT THERE. 463 PEOPLE APPLIED FOR THIS JOB!

WHOA, RAFFI. THAT'S VERY UH... LETHAL LOOKING.

SO MUCH FOR 'NO MORE WAR TOYS.' SYDNEY GOT HIM THAT. SHE AND MO TOOK HIM TO TOYS R US LAST NIGHT WHILE I WAS AT A FREEDOM TO MARRY MEETING.

HEY, DO YOU HAVE ANY INTEREST IN VOLUNTEERING? IT'S SUCH IMPORTANT WORK!

UM... ACTUALLY, MARRIAGE ISN'T REAL HIGH ON MY AGENDA RIGHT NOW.

TONI, NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO FIGHT FOR THE DUBIOUS RIGHT OF HAVING THEIR DOMESTIC AFFAIRS LEGITIMIZED BY THE PATRIARCHY.

LOOK WHAT I GOT, GINGER!

LISTEN, CLARICE, IT'S A MUCH MORE RADICAL ACT FOR TWO WOMEN TO CHALLENGE THE STATE BY GETTING MARRIED THAN TO SIT AROUND MUTTERING ABOUT THE PATRIARCHY.

UM... COULD YOU EXPLAIN THAT STUFF ABOUT "POINTS" AGAIN, AND HOW THEY AFFECT THE INTEREST RATE?

THWACK!

RAFFI!

LATER THAT EVENING...

I LOVE THAT WE'RE FRIENDS WITH GINGER. IT MAKES ME FEEL SO SOPHISTICATED, LIKE WE'RE IN A NOEL COWARD PLAY. WHEN WAS IT YOU TWO HAD THAT AFFAIR? TEN YEARS AGO?

CLARICE?

LOVE and WORK part I

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BUTCH IN THE STREETS, FEMME IN THE SHEETS? HOW **TOO** TRITE.

SIT BACK & HANG ON AS OUR SPECIAL 2-PART SERIES EXPLORES SOME **MORE PIQUANT** DISPARITIES BETWEEN WORK-PLACE AND BED-ROOM DEMEANOR.

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AT WORK, CLARICE HAS LASERLIKE FOCUS, YOUR HONOR, MY ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE IS OVERLOOKING SECTION 304 (a) AND (f), 42 U.S.C. SEC. 7604, WHICH SETS AN EMISSION LIMIT OF 5mg/m³ OVER ANY 30 DAY PERIOD, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.



...AND TONI EXUDES MATURITY.

BECAUSE I'M THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THAT'S WHY!

JOAN, LET'S DISCUSS THIS AFTER LUNCH. YOU KNOW YOU GET IRRITABLE WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY.



BUT IN THE BOUDOIR...



AT THE BOOKSTORE, JEZANNA IS A WOMAN OF FEW WORDS,

DIDJA SEE BOUNDERS BOOKS AND MUSIC IS HAVING THEIR GRAND OPENING NEXT MONTH?



... BUT IN AN INTIMATE SETTING, SHE'S A BIT MORE VOLUBLE.

OH, WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO DO THAT? YES! DON'T STOP! @*#! ME, YOU *\$@%!



GINGER HAS AN EYE TO THE FUTURE AT WORK,

SO I HEAR YOU FINALLY GOT A **REAL** JOB.

DR. REYNOLDS, I MAY HAVE MADE A FRACTION OF YOUR SALARY HERE, BUT I TAUGHT **TWICE** YOUR COURSE LOAD. YOU CAN KISS MY ADJUNCT ASS GOODBYE.



... BUT IN BED, SHE'S LIVING IN THE PAST.



ON THE JOB, MO STANDS BY HER PRINCIPLES...

ARE WE JUST GONNA SIT AROUND WITH OUR THUMBS UP OUR BUTTS TILL ONE SUPREME C.E.O. ACCUMULATES **ALL** THE WEALTH ON THE **PLANET**? MARX WAS RIGHT! CAPITALISM TENDS INEVITABLY TOWARD **MONOPOLY**, AND RICH PEOPLE SUCK!

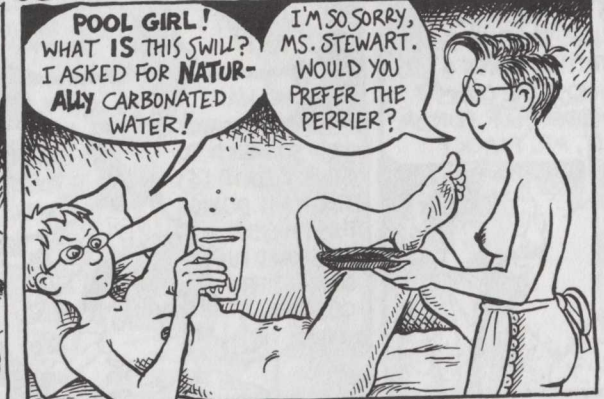


... AND SYDNEY'S OUT OF CONTROL.

NOT **ONE** OF YOU OVERPRIVILEGED, BEER-PICKLED **FRAT FOLLOWERS** READ THE CHAPTER? WE'LL WASTE YOUR **OWN** LIVES IF YOU MUST, BUT **DON'T WASTE MINE!**



BUT IN THE HEAT OF PASSION, MATTERS ARE DIFFERENT.



TO BE CONTINUED...

LOVE and WORK part II

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TO LOVE AND TO WORK. THE TWIN CONDITIONS OF A MEANINGFUL LIFE. BUT IS OUR PERFORMANCE IN ONE ARENA AN INDEX OF OUR PERFORMANCE IN THE OTHER?

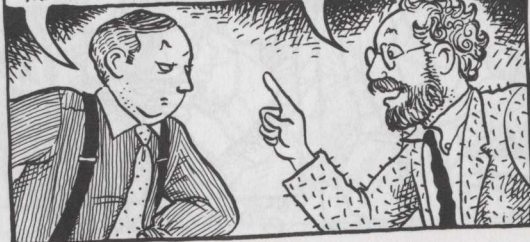
JOIN US AS WE SEEK THE ANSWER IN THIS FINAL INSTALLMENT OF OUR PENETRATING INVESTIGATIVE SERIES.

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AND STUART'S FUNDRAISING ZEAL IS UNFLAGGING.

FOOD FOR OLD PEOPLE? WE HERE AT THE GOLIATH HEALTH PLAN HAVE NEVER FUNDED ANYTHING LIKE THAT IN THE PAST.

DID YOU KNOW EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON ELDER NUTRITION SAVES \$3.25 IN HOSPITAL COSTS? CONSIDER YOUR BOTTOM LINE, MR. FLACK!



SPARROW'S A MODEL OF DECISIVENESS DOWN AT THE SHELTER...



TIPS O' THE NIB TO PATTI, MCMAJAMY & NAT GRANT

BUT IN THE RACK, SHE CAN'T DECIDE,

... AND HE FINALLY FLAGS.



THEA'S EASYGOING ON THE JOB...



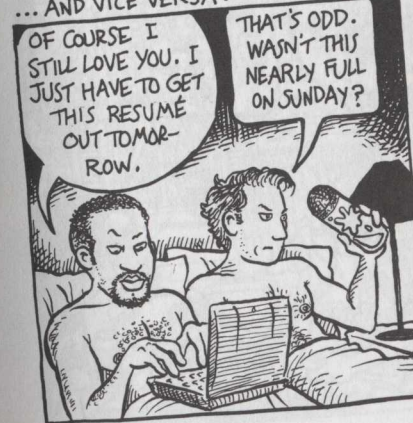
BUT A BIT MORE PARTICULAR IN BED...



DISORIENTED BY HIS PROLONGED UNEMPLOYMENT, CARLOS IS HAVING SEX WHEN HE SHOULD BE WORKING...



... AND VICE VERSA.

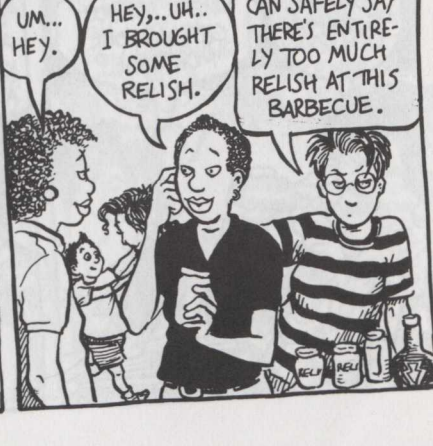
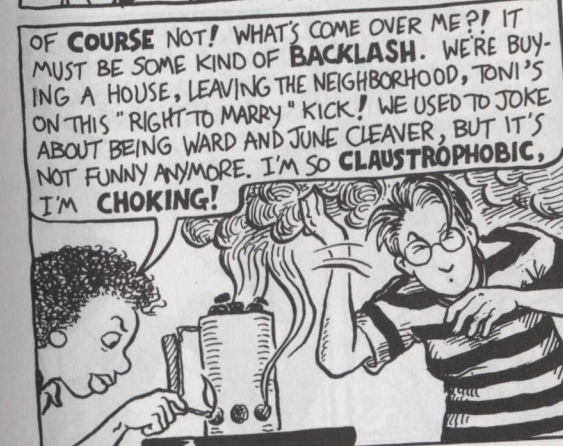


AND LOIS BRINGS TO BOTH WORK AND PLAY... A CONSISTENT, SERVICE-ORIENTED APPROACH.



an embarrassment of condiments

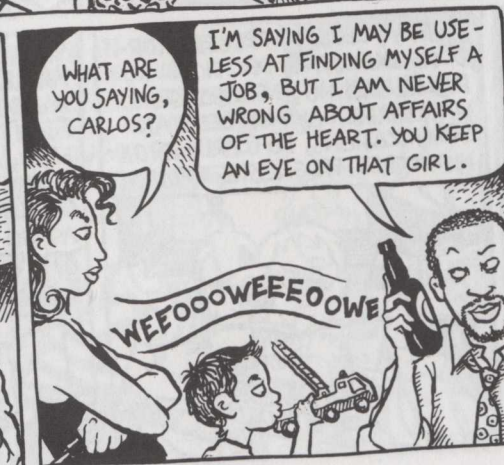
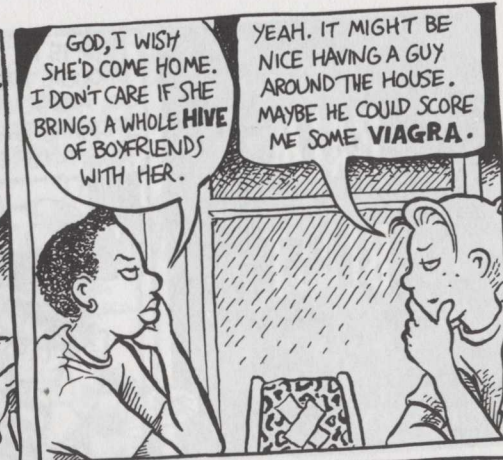
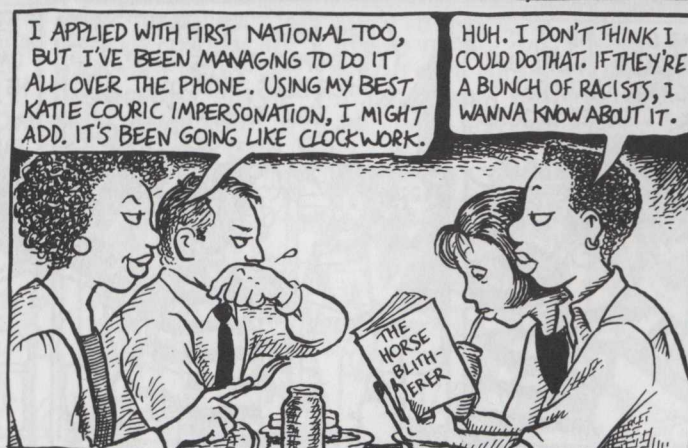
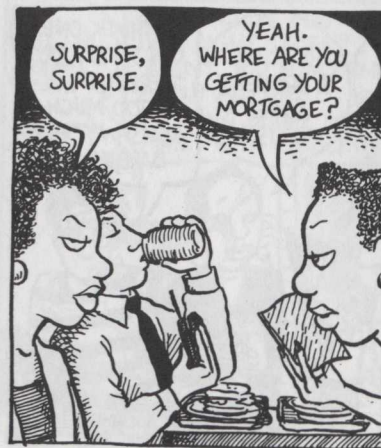
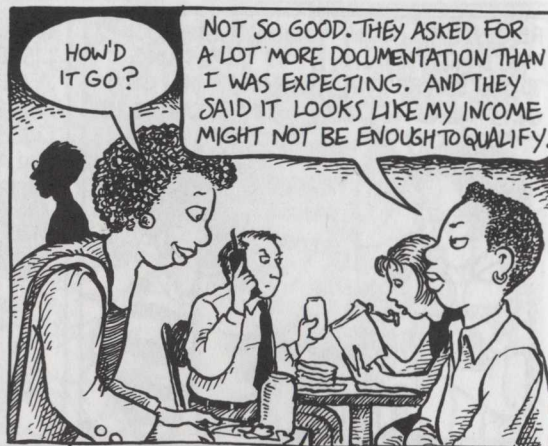
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home economics

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IN A BRISK DOWNTOWN EATERY...



BALM BLAST

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THIS IS NICE. WE DON'T SPEND ENOUGH TIME TOGETHER. UM... SO, ARE YOU GONNA DRAW UP THAT SPENDING PLAN TODAY? YOU KNOW, TO GET YOUR DEBT UNDER CONTROL?



I CAN'T THINK ABOUT IT RIGHT NOW. THE ANTIHISTAMINES ARE STARTING TO KICK IN.

HEY! I JUST HEARD A NEW CAT ALLERGY SOLUTION! APPLY **TIGER BALM** AROUND YOUR EYES! I HAVE AN OLD TIN SOMEWHERE IF YOU...



I DON'T THINK SO. I RATHER LIKE BEING ABLE TO SEE.

GOD! HAVE YOU READ ABOUT THIS "MILLENNIUM MARCH" BROUHAHA? THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AND THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH GOT TOGETHER AND UNILATERALLY DECIDED TO THROW A NATIONAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON IN 2000.



A TIDY, CLOSED-PROCESS, TOP-DOWN EXECUTIVE DECISION. NO PUBLIC MEETING, NO DISCUSSION WITH OTHER GAY AND LESBIAN ORGANIZATIONS, NO COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRESSIVE GROUPS.



THE THEME IS "FAITH AND FAMILY." GAG ME WITH A RAINBOW FLAG! OR A **CRUCIFIX**! THAT'S PROBABLY THE LOGO, A RAINBOW CRUCIFIX! I BET THEY'RE PRINTING IT ON SOUVENIR DIAPER BAGS AS WE SPEAK!



WELL, IF THE MESSAGE THAT WE'RE ALL CHURCHGOING MALL PATRONS WINS US MORE SUPPORT, MAYBE IT'S A GOOD STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT.

WHAT MOVEMENT?! THIS ISN'T A MOVEMENT ANY MORE, IT'S A **@#i*! CLOSELY-HELD CORPORATION**, RUN BY A BUNCH OF WHITE, POWER-HUNGRY **MARKETING STRATEGISTS** WHO'RE PACKAGING OUR LIVES INTO A COMMODITY THEY CAN SELL TO PAY THEIR SALARIES!



COME ON, MO. TIMES HAVE CHANGED. ONE SOUNDBITE ON CNN'S WORTH A HUNDRED SWEATY, WEEKEND-LONG, CONSENSUS-BUILDING MASS MEETINGS.



WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON, ANYWAY?

NOBODY'S. I'M JUST BEING INTELLECTUALLY RIGOROUS.



UM... SYDNEY? I HAD AN IDEA FOR HOW YOU COULD START WHITTLING DOWN YOUR CREDIT CARD BILL.



DOES IT INVOLVE PERFORMING LEWD ACTS?

MOVE IN WITH ME. WE'D BOTH SAVE OVER A COUPLE HUNDRED BUCKS A MONTH. NOT TO MENTION THE COMMUTING TIME.



YOU MEAN **LIVE** TOGETHER?



WELL, THERE WOULD ALSO BE LEWD ACTS INVOLVED.

HUH. WHY DON'T YOU GO GET THAT TIGER BALM? I HAVE A FEW OTHER IDEAS WHERE WE CAN APPLY IT.

it's a lifestyle choice

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SPARROW IS STILL SOJOURNING AT STUART'S...

GOD! THAT NEW NEIGHBOR'S DRIVING ME **INSANE!** HE'S PLAYED THIS MÖTLEY CRÜE ALBUM SIX TIMES SINCE I GOT HOME! AND IS THAT **CIGAR SMOKE?**

Girls, Girls, Girls!

POOR BABY. SEE YOU LATER. I'M HAVING DINNER WITH LOIS AND GINGER.

SHORTLY...

THANKS FOR COMING, SPARROW. I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH.

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HOW'S IT GOING, BABE?

GOOD! I MISS YOU GUYS TOO. I'M FEELING MUCH CLEARER ABOUT THINGS WITH STUART, AND I'M READY TO COME BACK.

EXCELLENT! ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHAT WE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.

NOW WHAT? HAVE YOU INSTITUTED VISITING HOURS FOR MALE GUESTS?

HEY, STU CAN MOVE IN AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED. WE JUST WANT YOU TO CO-SIGN THE MORTGAGE AND SHELL OUT FIVE THOU TO HELP BUY THIS PLACE.

WHAT?

TURNS OUT GINGER CAN'T AFFORD THE HOUSE ON HER OWN.

AND MY CREDIT ISN'T SO GOOD SINCE I DE-FULTED ON MY STUDENT LOAN.

COME ON! IT'S A GOOD INVESTMENT! AND NOT JUST FINANCIALLY!

IT'S AN INVESTMENT IN **FRIENDSHIP!** A COMMITMENT TO SHARING RESOURCES! A TRIUMPHANT BLOW TO THE ALIENATING CORPORATE FORCES THAT ARE STEADILY ERODING HUMAN BONDS!

OKAY. WHAT THE HELL. I'VE GOT SOME MONEY SAVED UP.

REALLY?

REALLY. I'VE BEEN GIVING A LOT OF THOUGHT LATELY TO HOW I WANT TO LIVE. IT'S BEEN NICE STAYING AT STUART'S AND HAVING SOME PRIVACY. BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT PERMANENTLY, THAT KIND OF ISOLATED, COUPLE-FOCUSED EXISTENCE, ALL CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD.

MEANWHILE, IN A DIFFERENT ZIP CODE...

...AND WITH THE ELECTRIC GARAGE DOOR OPENER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET OUT OF YOUR CAR TO GO INSIDE!

UH... I THINK WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE LESS... UH...

HERMETICALLY SEALED.

LATER THAT EVENING...

HI. LISTEN, I'M GONNA STAY HERE TONIGHT... I KNOW. ME TOO... WHAT?... WELL, I GUESS SO. BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S VERY HEALTHY IF YOU CAN'T BE AWAY FROM ME FOR EVEN ONE NIGHT.

UH... I DO MISS YOU, BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I WANT TO COME OVER.

Girls, Girls, Girls!

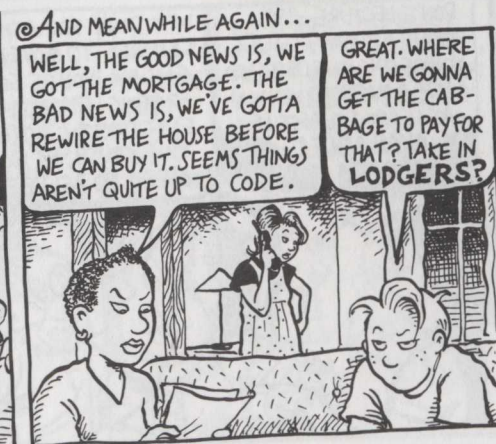
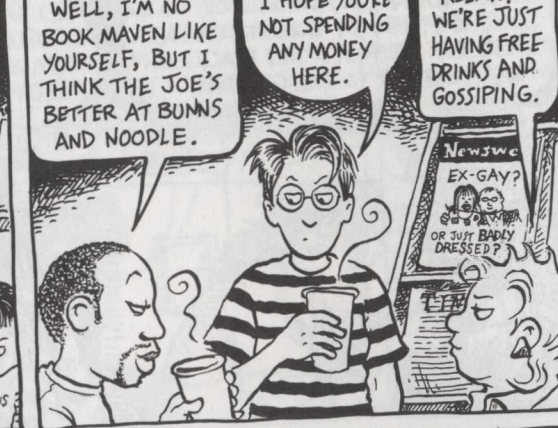
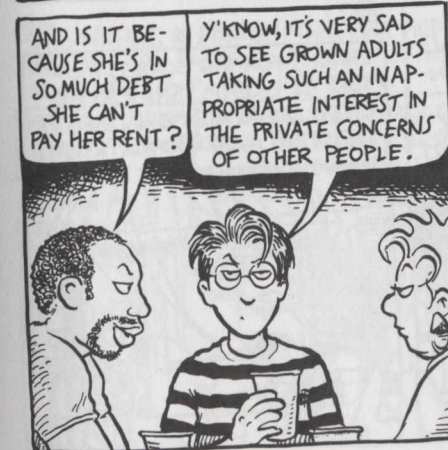
MACANUDO EXHAUST

I DON'T CARE IF HE'S DEAD. I STILL WANT TO IMPEACH NIXON

living arrangements

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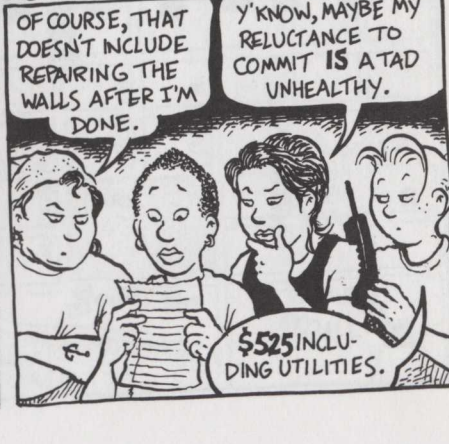
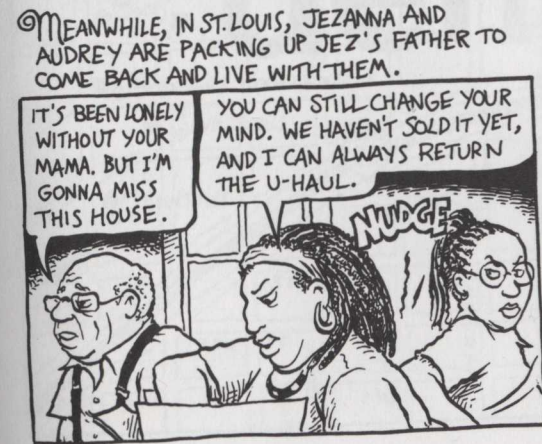
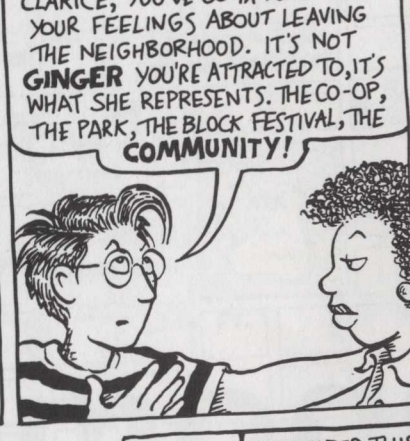
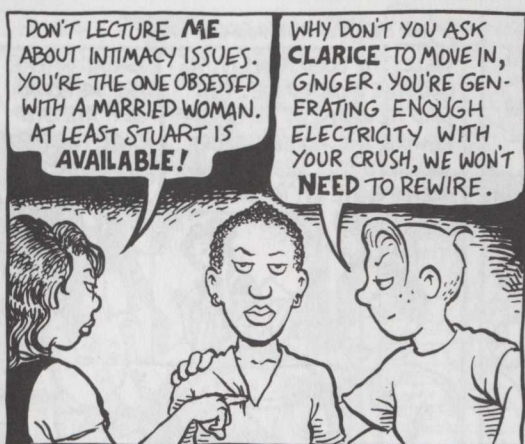
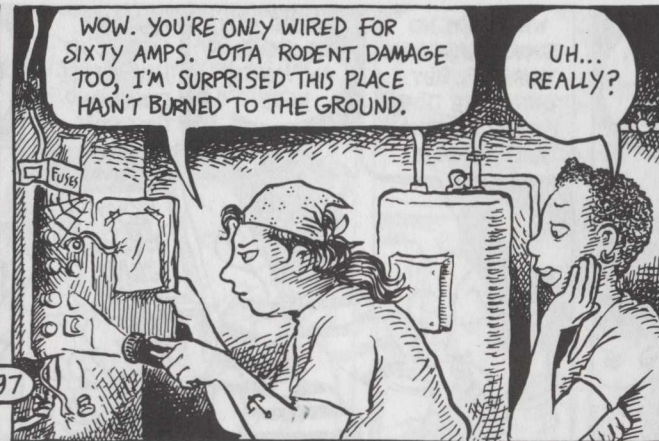
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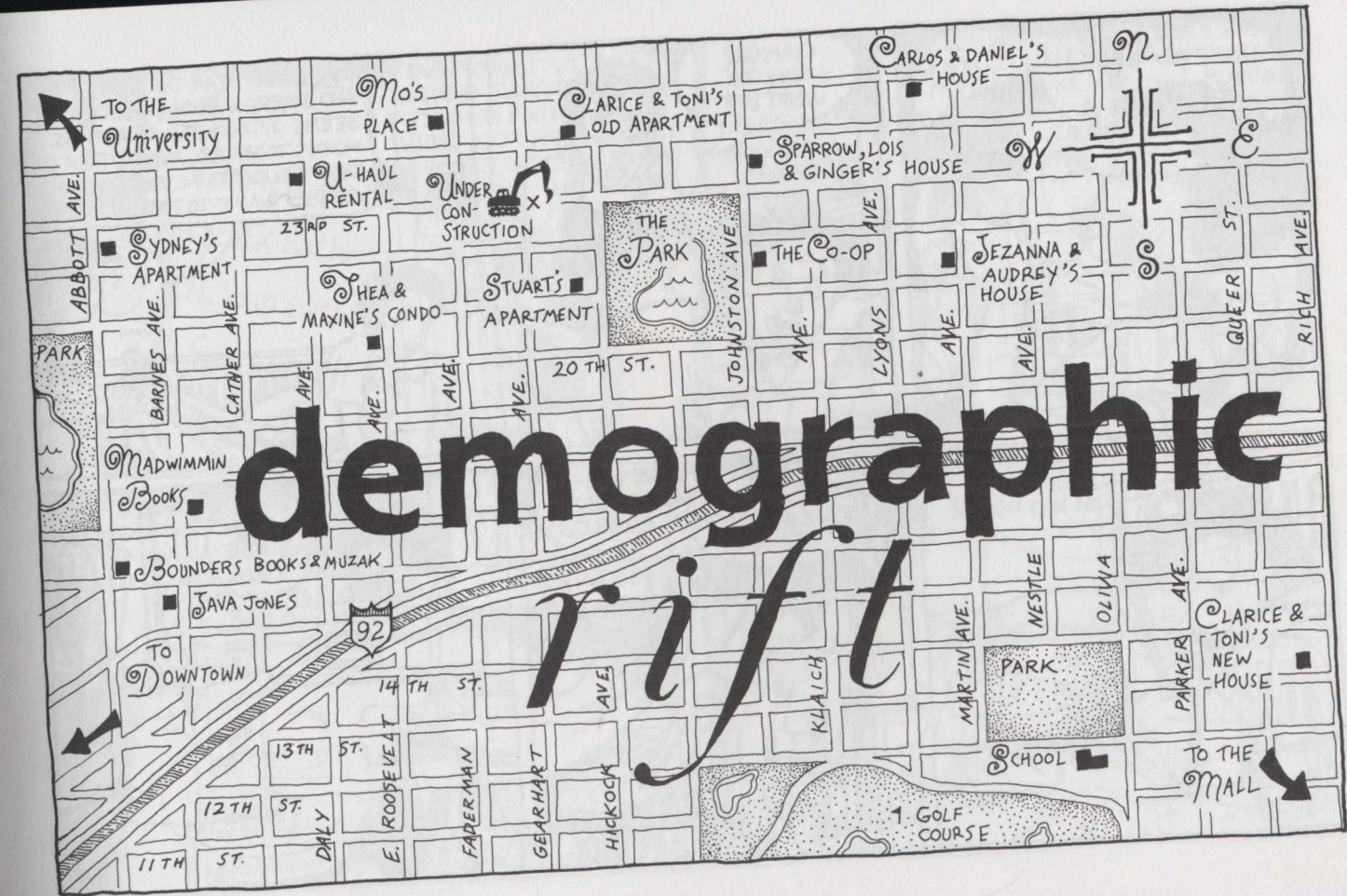


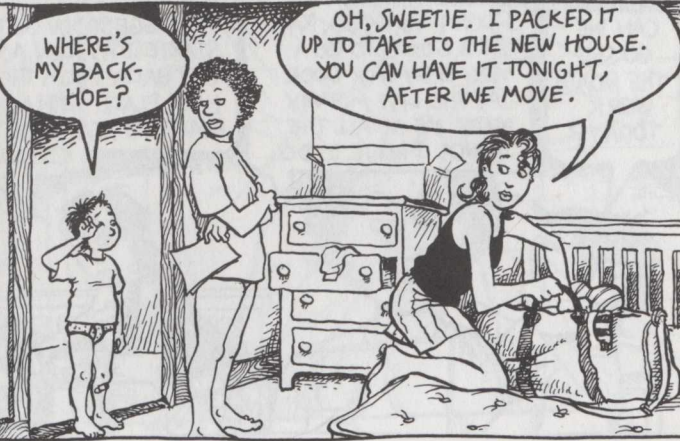
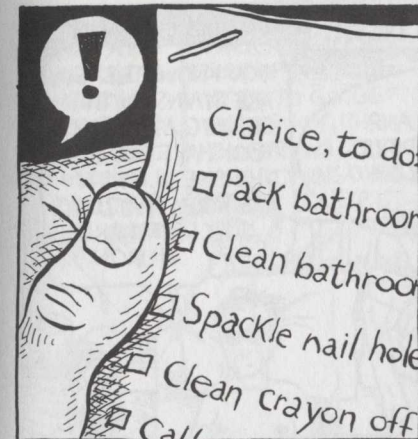
STRAY VOLTAGE

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OVER AT SYDNEY'S DIGS...



MEANWHILE, AT LOIS, GINGER AND SPARROW'S ...





GINGER! THE ELECTRICIAN'S HERE. SHE'S GONNATURN THE POWER OFF.

YO! CATH! BRING IN THE **SAWZALL**, WOULDJA?



I COULD GO FOR A LITTLE BUTCH-ON-BUTCH ACTION WITH A STRAPPING LASS LIKE THAT. QUITE A **TOOLBELT**.



HOW NICE FOR YOU.

I CLEARED A SPOT IN THE BASEMENT FOR STUART'S STUFF. IN CASE IT DOESN'T ALL FIT UP HERE.



I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE GONNA HAVE A FOURTH PERSON LIVING IN THIS PLACE. LET ALONE A MAN. I JUST HOPE HE'S NOT A COMPLETE SLOB.



YEAH. THAT WOULD REALLY BE A PROBLEM CONSIDERING WE'RE ALL SO FASTIDIOUS. GOD, THERE ARE **BARNACLES** GROWING IN HERE!

©AND AT STUART'S APARTMENT...



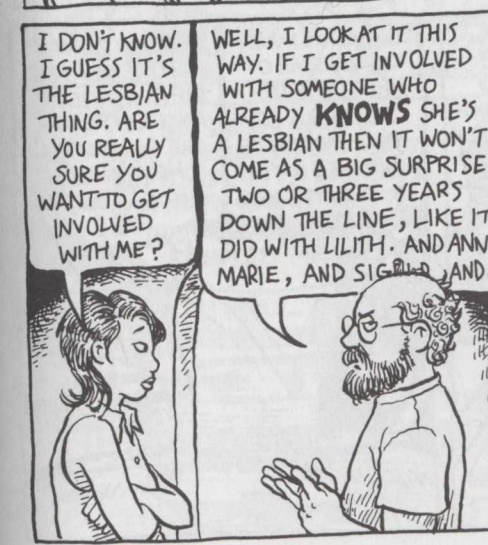
UM... COULDN'T YOU FIND ANY BOXES?

I FIGURED WE COULD JUST USE THESE SHOPPING BAGS.



SO, WE'RE REALLY DOING IT, HUH?

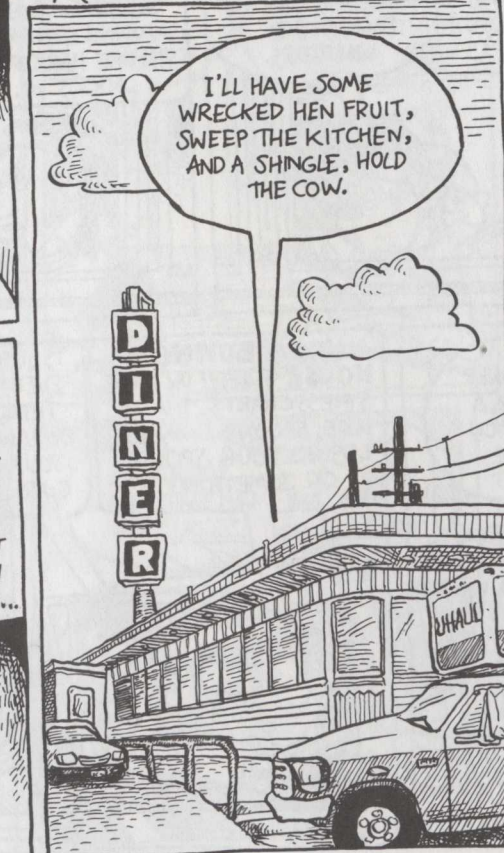
MOVING IN TOGETHER? UM... YEAH. WHY? ARE YOU HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS?



I DON'T KNOW. I GUESS IT'S THE LESBIAN THING. ARE YOU REALLY SURE YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED WITH ME?

WELL, I LOOK AT IT THIS WAY. IF I GET INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE WHO ALREADY **KNOWS** SHE'S A LESBIAN THEN IT WON'T COME AS A BIG SURPRISE TWO OR THREE YEARS DOWN THE LINE, LIKE IT DID WITH LILITH. AND ANN MARIE, AND SIGRID, AND...

MEANWHILE, 300 MILES AWAY...



I'LL HAVE SOME WRECKED HEN FRUIT, SWEEP THE KITCHEN, AND A SHINGLE, HOLD THE COW.



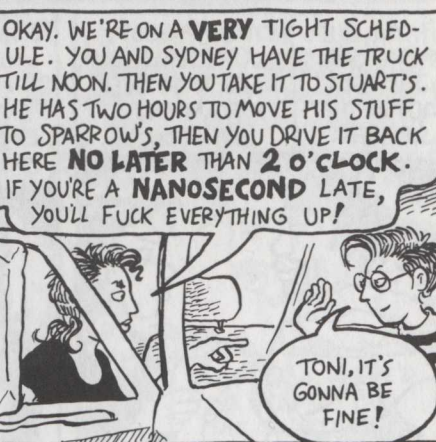
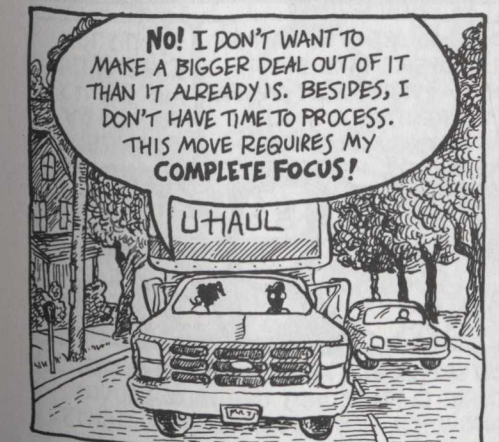
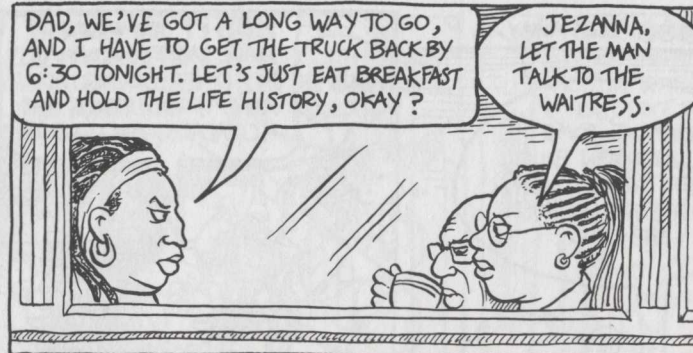
HUH?

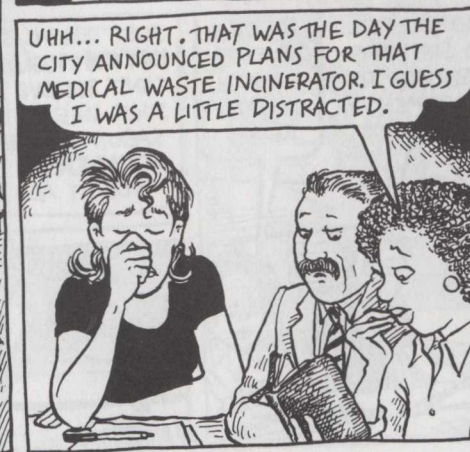
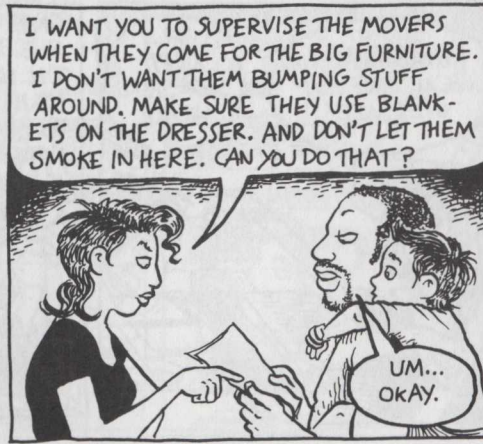
HUH?! YOU WOULDN'T HAVE LASTED LONG AT **MY** DINER, YOUNG LADY. RAN MY OWN PLACE FOR 40 YEARS, AND I NEVER...



JUST BRING HIM SOME SCRAMBLED EGGS, A PLATE OF HASH, AND TOAST, NO BUTTER.

WHAT-EVER.





MEANWHILE, THE DEAL IS CLOSED...

I HOPE YOU ENJOY THE NEIGHBORHOOD! WE LOVED IT, BUT THEN I GUESS WE WEREN'T EXACTLY A NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILY! HA HA!

COME ON, DENISE.

THANKS, ELAINE. IT WAS GREAT WORKING WITH YOU.

CONGRATS! CALL ME WHEN YOU'RE READY TO SELL!

YAY! WE'RE FORTY MINUTES BEHIND SCHEDULE! THE MOVERS WILL BE WAITING FOR US AT THE NEW HOUSE! I'M GONNA CALL CARLOS QUICK TO CHECK IN.

I'LL GET THE CAR AND MEET YOU OUT FRONT.



WHEN DID YOU TELL THEM TO SHUT OFF PHONE SERVICE TO THE APARTMENT?

UH...THE TWENTY-EIGHTH. I MEAN, TODAY.

JUST TELL ME, CLARICE. IS IT **INTENTIONAL**? BECAUSE I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU COULD DO SUCH AN EXCELLENT JOB OF SABOTAGING THIS MOVE **BY ACCIDENT**! I CAN'T TRUST YOU AT ALL ANY MORE!



SLAM!

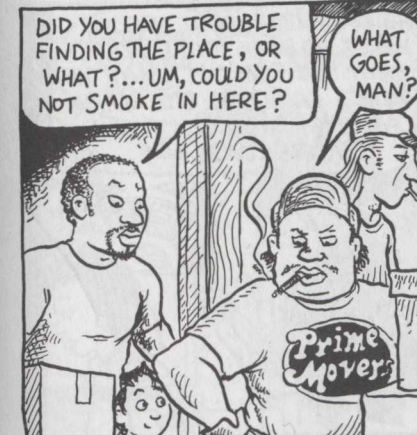


TONI, I'M ONLY HUMAN!

DRIVE FASTER. WE'RE NOT PAYING THOSE GUYS TO SIT AROUND SMOKING TIPARILLOS.



FINALLY! YOU GUYS ARE TWO HOURS LATE!



WHAT GOES, MAN?



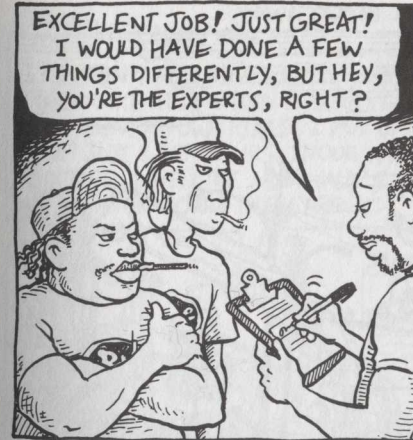
SKRITCH!

BEEP BEEP BEEP

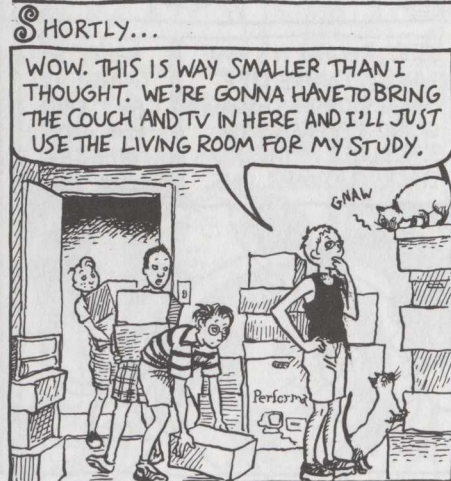


LIKE THIS GOUGE, FOR EXAMPLE? YOU PROBABLY COULD HAVE AVOIDED THAT WITH A BLANKET...

MEANWHILE, AT THE NEW HOUSE...



ON ROUTE TO MO'S APARTMENT...





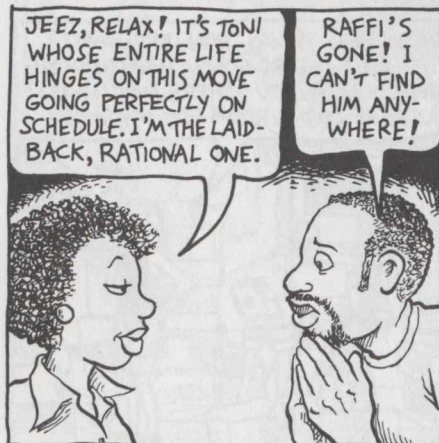
RAFFI! QUIT FOOLING AROUND!

HELLO?



CARLOS! WAS THAT OUR MOVERS DRIVING AWAY JUST NOW? WHAT TOOK THEM SO LONG?

CLARICE! ¡DIOS MIO! I'M SO SORRY!



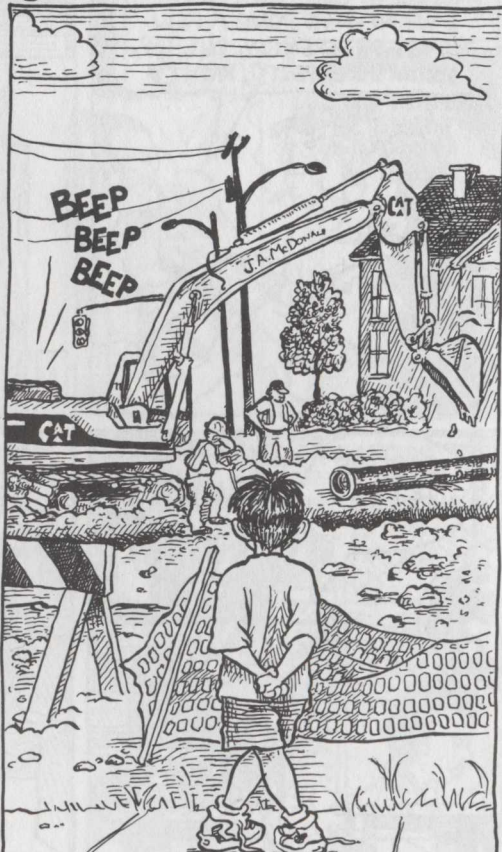
JEEZ, RELAX! IT'S TONI WHOSE ENTIRE LIFE HINGES ON THIS MOVE GOING PERFECTLY ON SCHEDULE. I'M THE LAID-BACK, RATIONAL ONE.

RAFFI'S GONE! I CAN'T FIND HIM ANYWHERE!

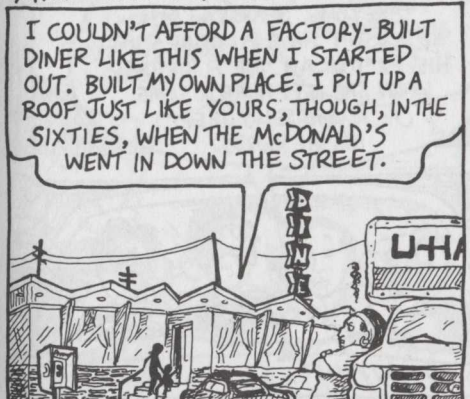


YOU FUCKING IDIOT! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HIM I WILL DISEMBOWEL YOU WITH MY BARE HANDS!

SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY...



227 MILES AWAY...

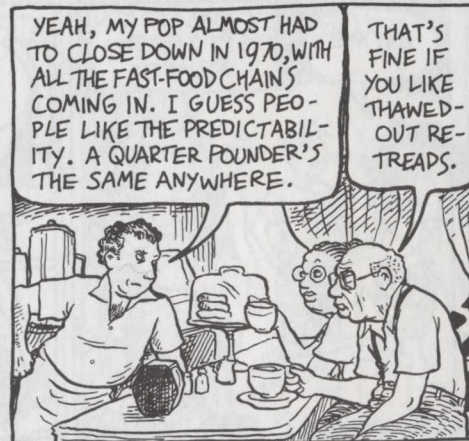


I COULDN'T AFFORD A FACTORY-BUILT DINER LIKE THIS WHEN I STARTED OUT. BUILT MY OWN PLACE. I PUT UP A ROOF JUST LIKE YOURS, THOUGH, IN THE SIXTIES, WHEN THE McDONALD'S WENT IN DOWN THE STREET.



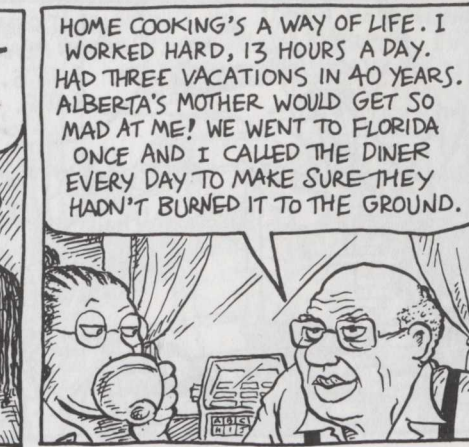
NOW WHEN I TRAVEL, I LIKE TO SAMPLE THE LOCAL FARE. YOU FIND SOME AMAZING THINGS. HADA HOT DOG ONCE UP IN OHIO STUFFED WITH CHEESE, WRAPPED IN THICK BACON, AND DEEP FRIED.

WHOA.



YEAH, MY POP ALMOST HAD TO CLOSE DOWN IN 1970, WITH ALL THE FAST-FOOD CHAINS COMING IN. I GUESS PEOPLE LIKE THE PREDICTABILITY. A QUARTER POUNDER'S THE SAME ANYWHERE.

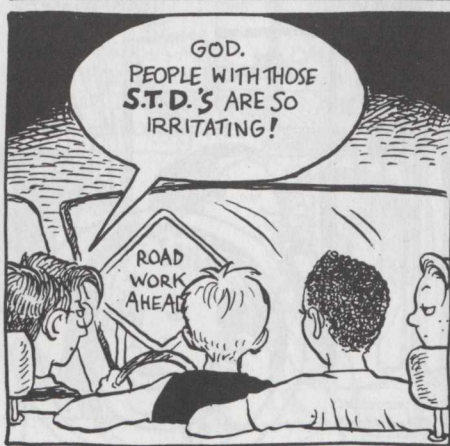
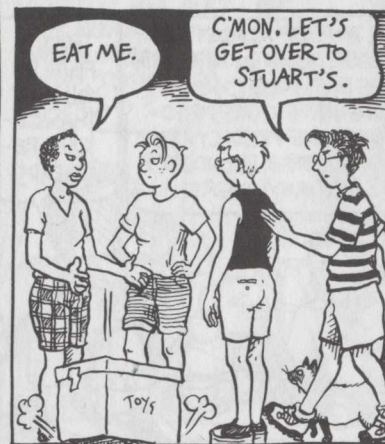
THAT'S FINE IF YOU LIKE THAWED-OUT RETREADS.

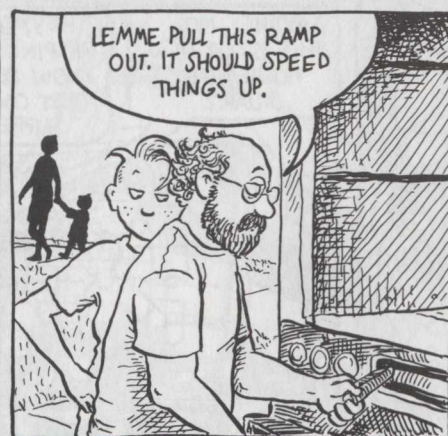
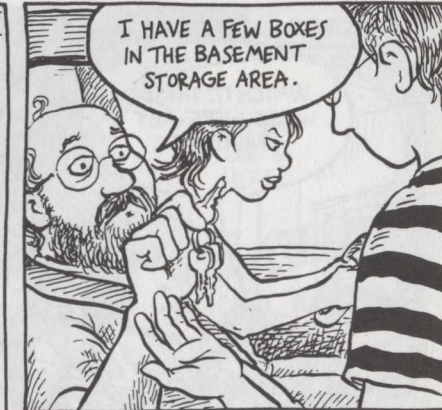


HOME COOKING'S A WAY OF LIFE. I WORKED HARD, 13 HOURS A DAY. HAD THREE VACATIONS IN 40 YEARS. ALBERTA'S MOTHER WOULD GET SO MAD AT ME! WE WENT TO FLORIDA ONCE AND I CALLED THE DINER EVERY DAY TO MAKE SURE THEY HADN'T BURNED IT TO THE GROUND.

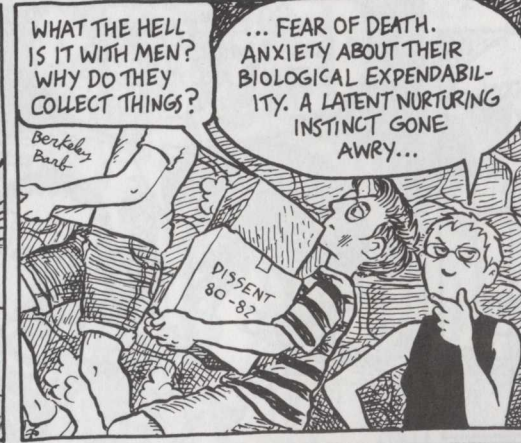


THEA? IT'S ME. JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE YOU AND ANJI HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL... THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER?! BEHIND THE DOOR TO THE OFFICE! WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?!

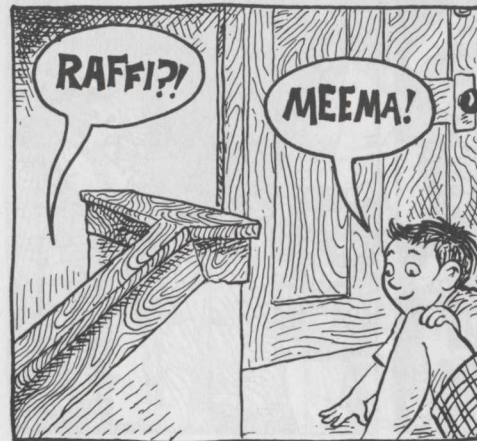




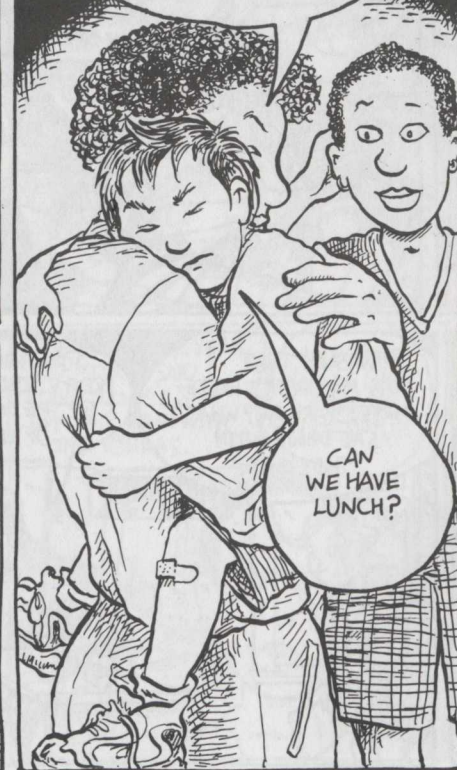
MEANWHILE...



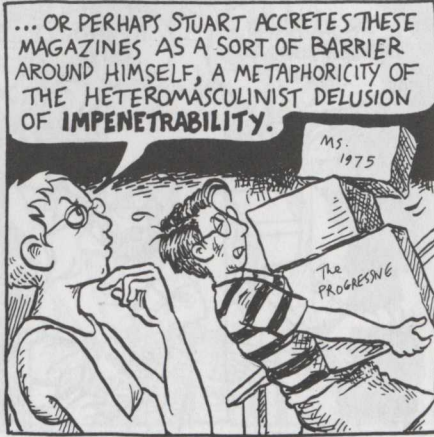
A FEW MINUTES LATER...

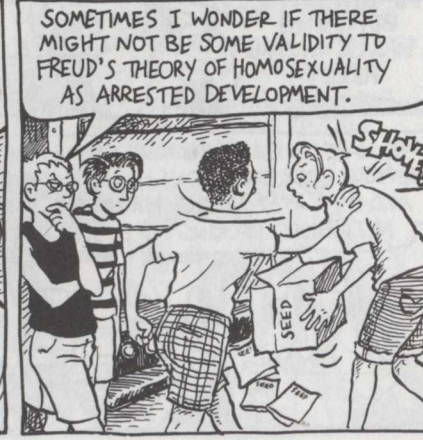


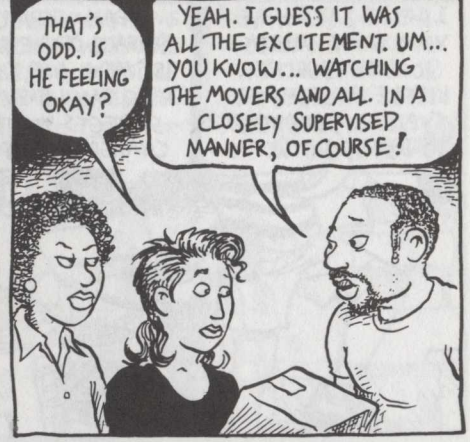
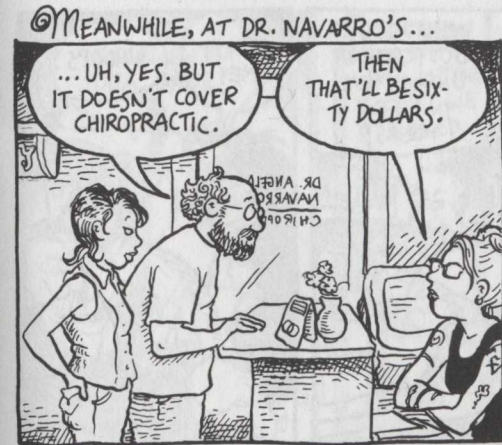
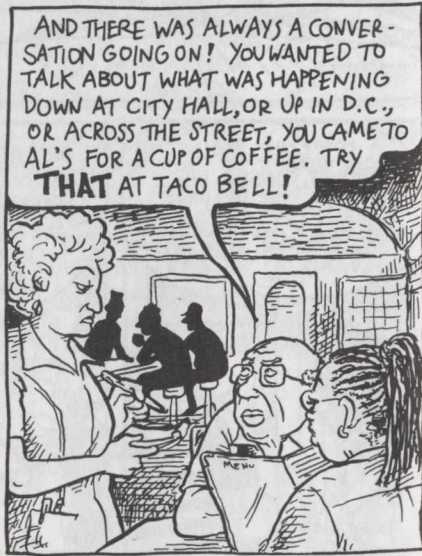
OH, MY LITTLE MONSTER BABY! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

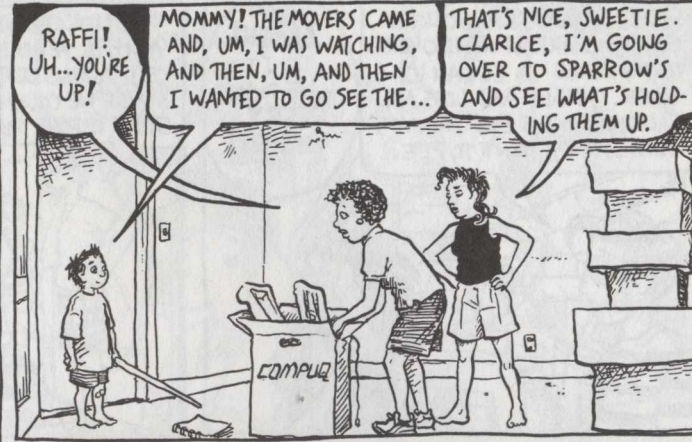
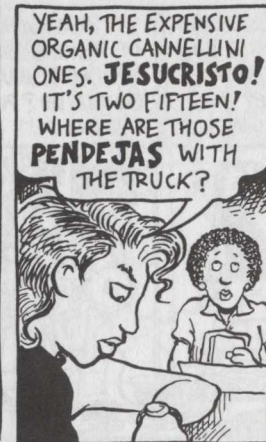
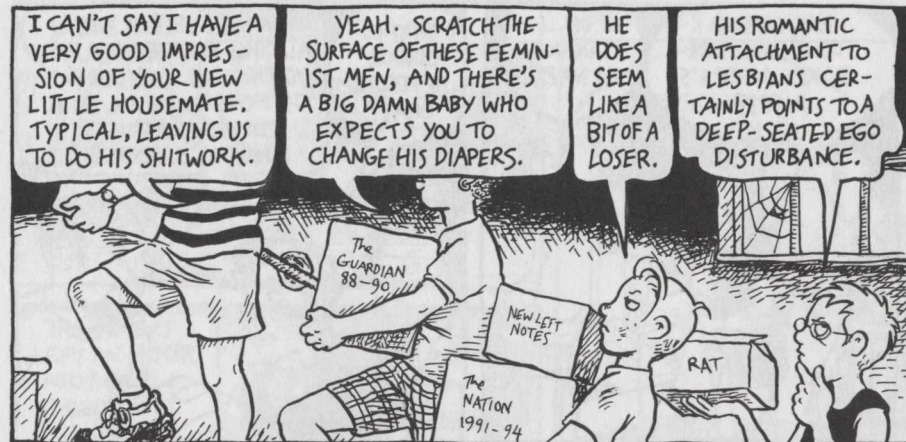


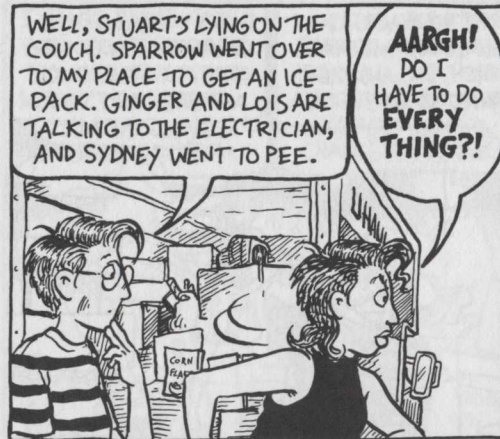
MEANWHILE...









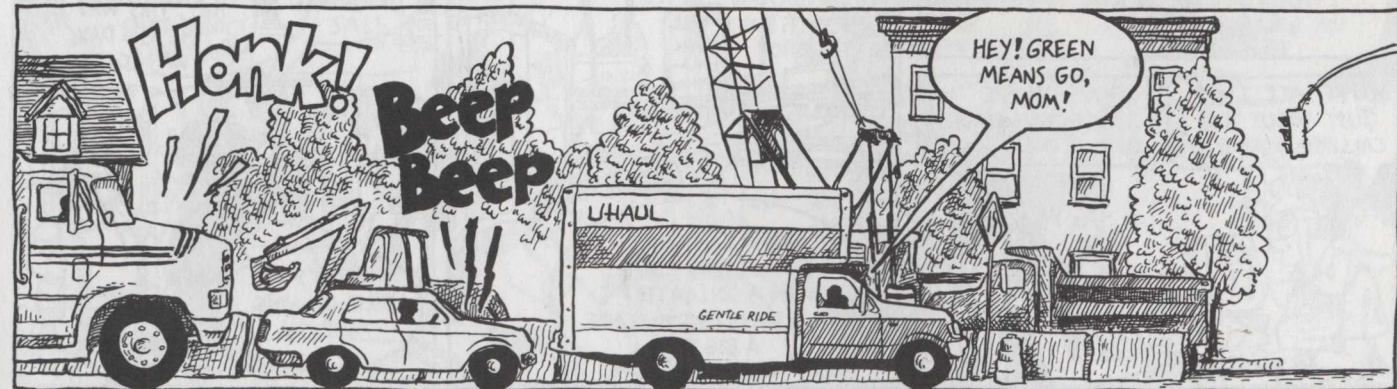
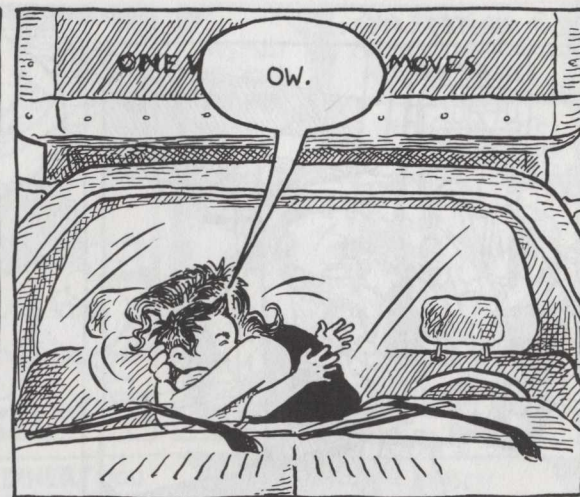
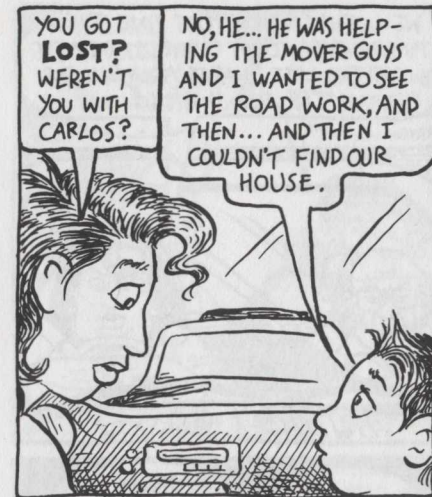


Forty-five minutes later...

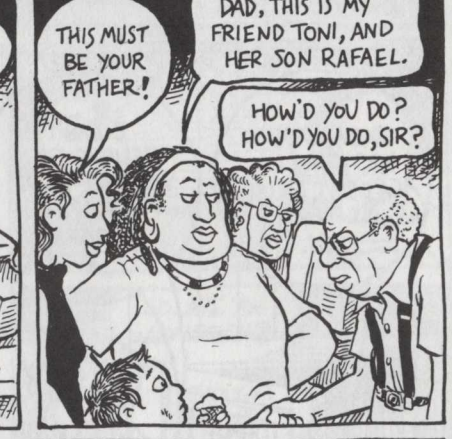
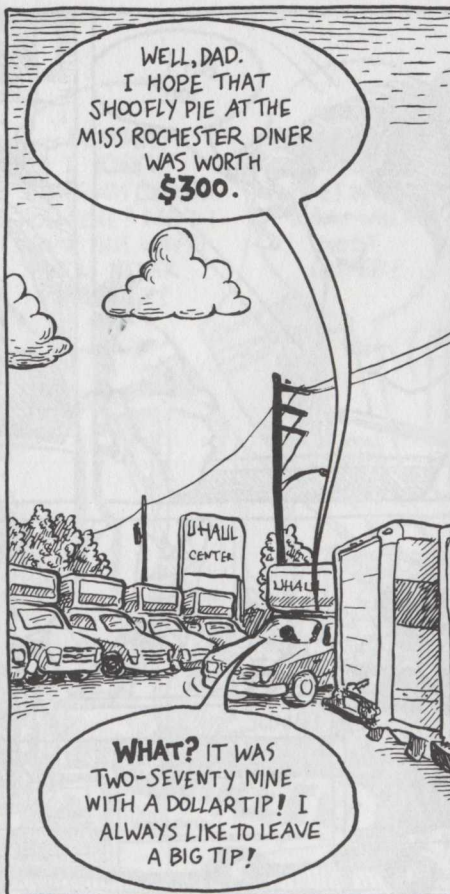




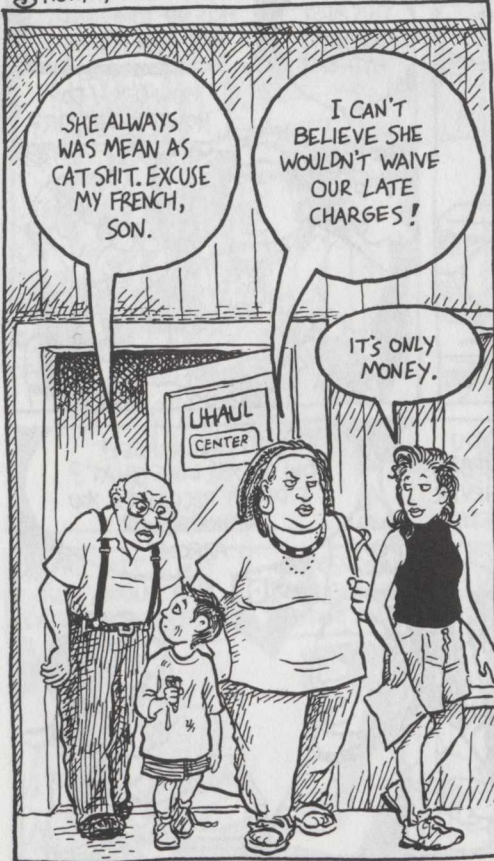




20 MINUTES LATER...

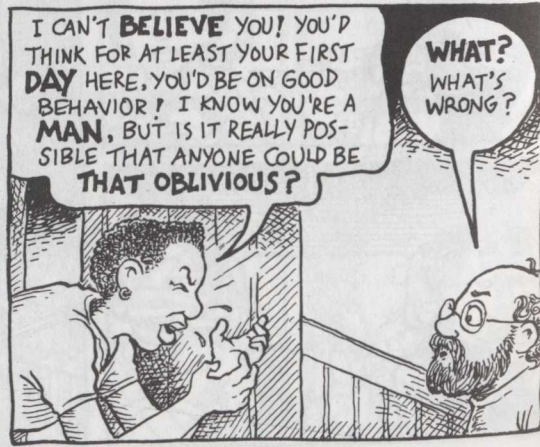
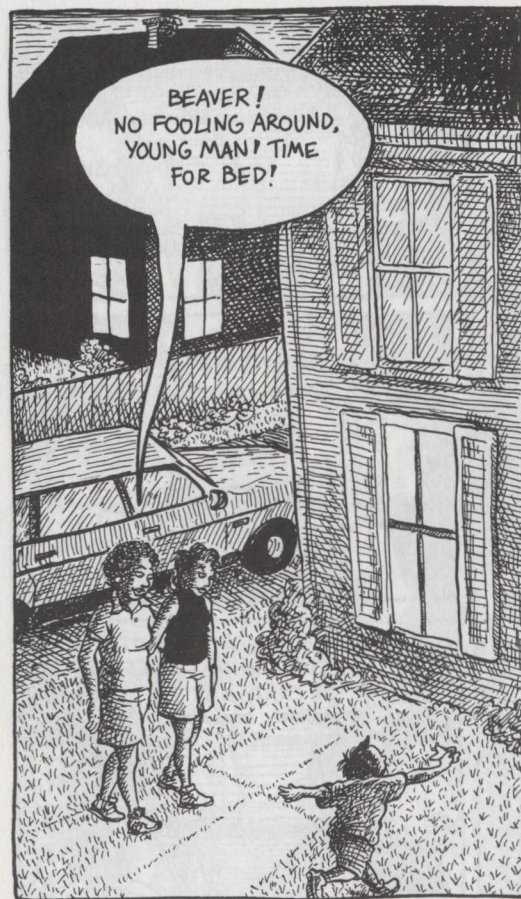


SHORTLY...



A SHORT WHILE LATER...





WHAT?
WHAT'S WRONG?

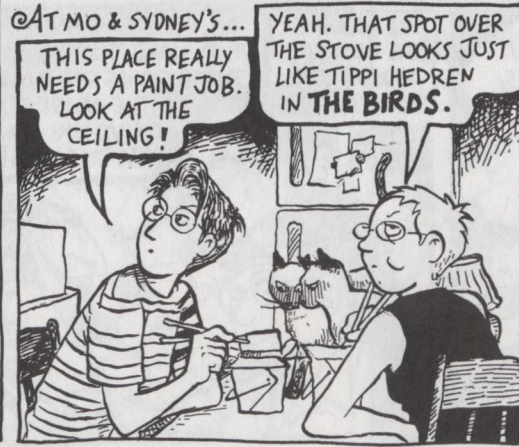


THIS
LUNKHEAD LEFT
THE TOILET
SEAT UP!

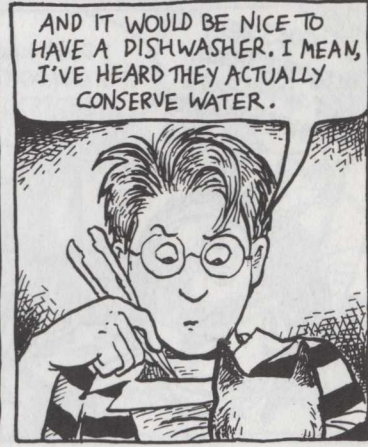
OH, SHIT!
I WAS **CLEANING** IT!
I JUST WENT DOWNSTAIRS
TO FIND SOME SCOURING
POWDER!

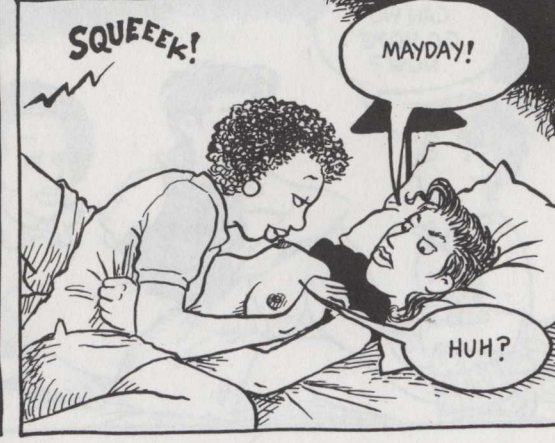
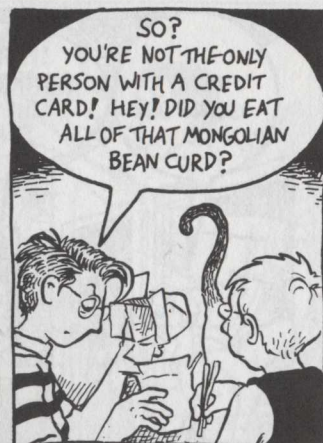
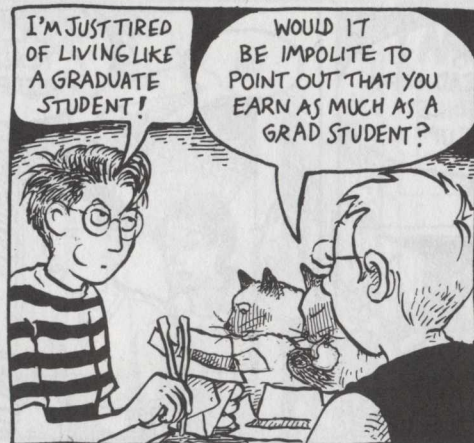


UM... IT
REALLY
NEEDED IT.

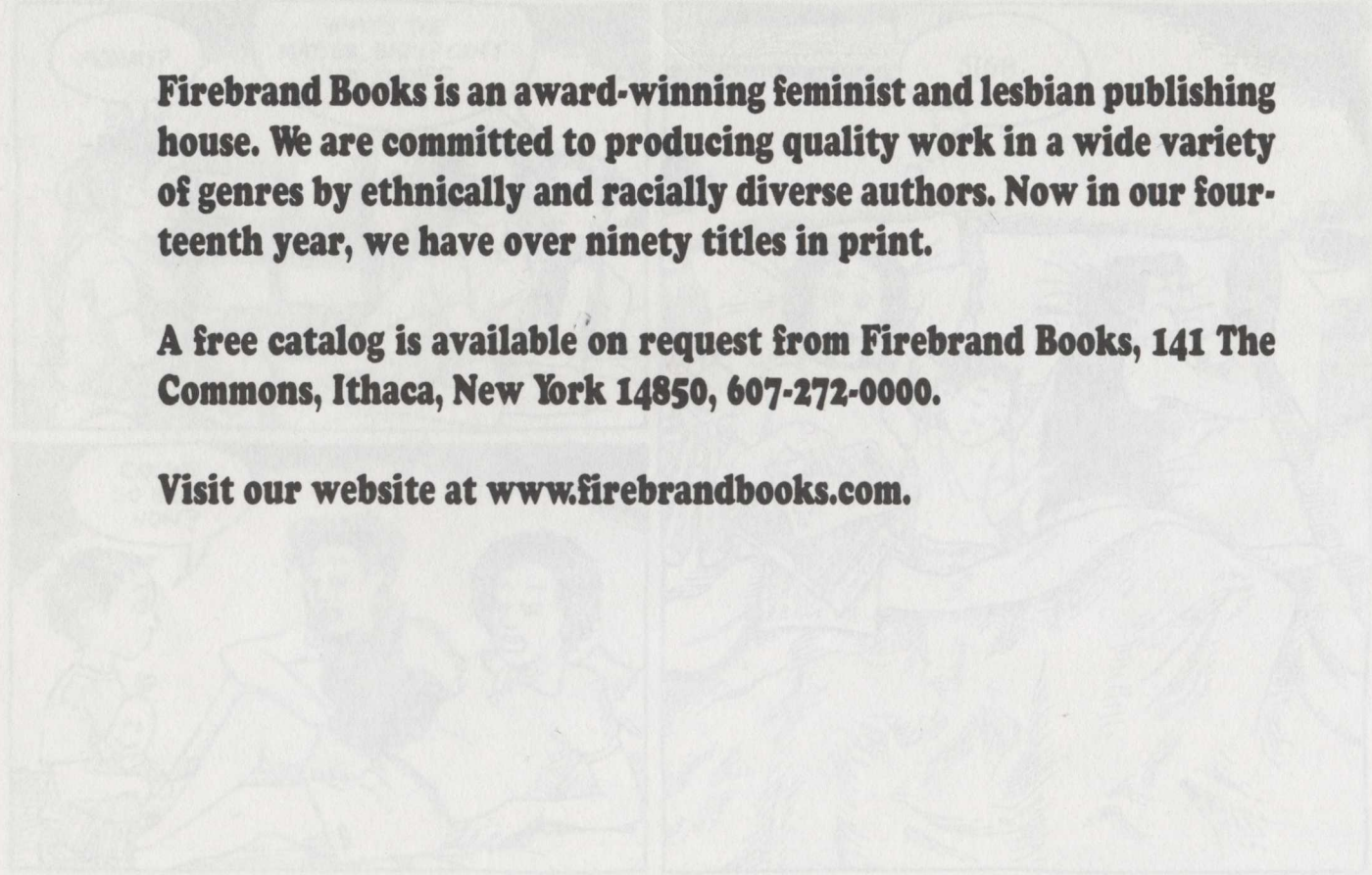


YEAH. THAT SPOT OVER
THE STOVE LOOKS JUST
LIKE TIPPI HEDREN
IN **THE BIRDS**.









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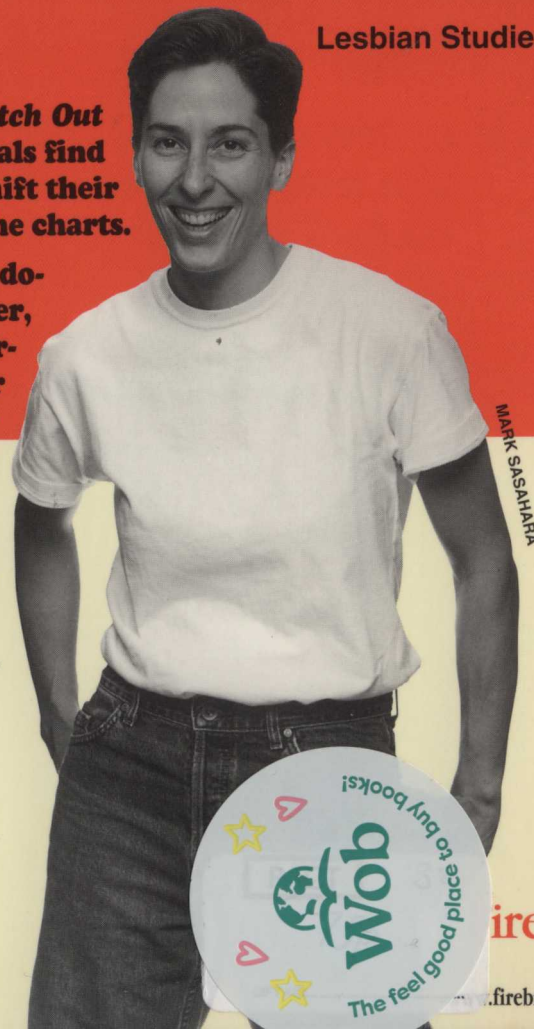
Lesbian Studies/Humor

Big changes are set in motion in *Split-Level Dykes To Watch Out For* when many of Alison Bechdel's best-beloved lesbian gals find themselves on the move. As they come up with plans to shift their living arrangements, their stress-test ratings career off the charts.

Unwilling to end years of often contentious communal domesticity when their rented house is put up for sale, Ginger, Lois, and Sparrow decide to stay together and make a purchase offer. Jezanna has a man move in—relocating her father to live with her after her mother dies. Mo, ever desirous of righting the bad behavior of others, considers the cost-saving benefits of cohabitation with Sydney.

And all homophobia breaks out—not to mention the other “isms”—when Clarice and Toni head for the suburbs with their son Raffi.

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